

12th Annual International Symposium on Online Journalism

Day 2, April 1, 2011:

Keynote Address: *Building a Platform for Neighborhood News and Information*

Keynote Speaker:

- **Warren Webster:** President of Patch Media
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Rosental Calmon Alves: So, now it's time for us to continue. We have the pleasure to have our keynote speaker today from Patch Media. And I am inviting Glenn Frankel, the Director of the School of Journalism of the University of Texas at Austin, to introduce our keynote speaker.

Glenn Frankel: Thanks, Rosental. First of all, having had lunch and talked to people today and having been here this morning, I just want to again compliment Rosental on an incredible—and Amy as well—for the incredible sort of mix of people we've had here and the events we've had. I mean, I think it's quite extraordinary to see scholars and practitioners, you know, talking to each other in such direct and important ways. And I don't know about you, I've just loved everything. This is the first time I've been here. It's my first year as director. And I'm just knocked out. I guess all kinds of academic symposia are like this? [Laughter] No? Really? Well, this one is pretty amazing.

Now Rosental, I'm sort of the last minute introducer here, but in some ways, I'm very appropriate, because my own career began in Chesterfield County, Virginia in the early seventies. I was a very multimedia reporter there. I had a Polaroid camera that was the size of a television set, and a tape recorder that was about as big as a phone book, and this—this notebook. And so, those were my tools, and very multimedia. And I went out and, you know, my job was to cover the church news, and the Board of Zoning appeals and their decisions, and then, you know, more high school football games every weekend than they do at the NFL.

Jump 35 years from there when I was at Stanford University last year, and folks from something called Patch.com called up and wanted to come by. And they wanted to interview our masters students, masters in journalism students and other students as well for jobs. And they were paying real money and real benefits and spreading out all over the region. Three of them came that day. They, you know, took two rooms in the Department of Communication. It was like speed dating. They went through all these folks [and] offered about half of them jobs in the end. I think four or five of our students actually took it and they're out there now making some real money, but working, you know, 16-hour days grinding out all the material that Patch.com is putting up.

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Is it real journalism? Our speaker yesterday, one of our keynote speakers yesterday, Vivian Schiller—I don't know if you caught that particular line in her address—she was suggesting it was something else, but she didn't call it journalism. Others defend it.

We're going to today listen to Warren Webster, who's President of Patch Media. And so, he's the man right at the heart of this thing. Warren has had, what, the last dozen years in various media companies doing various things. You can see his bio in our program. But he was previously Director of Magazine Publishing at Gannet, one of those jobs, and Vice President of Material Media. So, Warren is right at the heart of the discussion over this and of the future of Patch.com, and we're happy to have him today.

And happy also because it's going to touch off a longer conversation about community journalism—what it is, where it's going. We're going to have a number of veterans of those wars. Because, you know, when you get right down to it, that's the ultimate battlefield for the future of journalism—what goes on in local communities, how those things are going to be covered, what's going to happen as the lights go out a little bit from traditional media outlets to new places. And the question is, where does Patch.com fit into this evolving and growing ecology of it? So Warren, come tell us.

Warren Webster: Okay, thank you. [Applause.] Hi, everyone. Great to be here. Thank you, Rosental and Glenn, for having me. I think it's a big honor to be part of this group. I just can tell it's been a great symposium so far. Anytime you want us to come to Austin, we will definitely come. I've never been here before. This is probably the most fun town I've ever been to. We found out late last night that everyone in Austin is in a band, I think. [Laughter] And we found out that Tequila works just as well as it does in New York City. So, thank you for having us. It's great to be here.

So, I'm going to tell you a little bit about Patch. And I'd love to just whip through some slides that go through what we're all about. This is probably the most exciting time in media ever that I can think of, certainly in any recent memory. And we feel like we're in the head car of a speeding, fast-paced train just zipping towards what the future is going to be of media. We're not sure what it looks like. We think Patch is one idea. There are a lot of others. So, I'm going to tell you what we're doing, and I'd love to chat more at the end of this about what you think we can do differently or questions that you have.

I'd love to open it up with a video that gives you kind of a sense for a day in the life of someone who works for Patch. I like this just because it's a good way to get a sense for what Patch is. So, I'll just click on this. (Oh, do we have sound?)

[Video plays.]

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—...Basking Ridge, New Jersey.

—Hi, my name is Cecilia Smith, and I'm the editor of Darien Patch.

—My name is Satta Sarmah, and I am the local editor of Rye Patch.

—My name is Christian Camerota, and I'm the editor of Wilton Patch.

—My name is Ari Soglin. I'm a regional editor with Patch.com in the San Francisco East Bay.

—I'm Jacqueline Howard, the local editor of Hermosa Beach Patch.

—My name is Liz Taurasi, and I'm the regional editor here in Boston, Massachusetts.

—I'm Brian Farnham, Editor and Chief at Patch.

—I'm Warren Webster, President of Patch.

—Our editors are community based, so that they're living in their towns, they're working in their towns.

—Talking to people, meeting people.

—Township committee meetings and other government meetings.

—Servicing or covering the business community.

—My job primarily as a journalist is to be a watchdog. I'm keeping an eye out on the people who are making very influential decisions.

—We were talking to the police. We were watching the scanners. And we were there to say, "Hey, just got word, the police found him safe."

—I just did a story about a bunch of 5th graders at the school that won a global competition.

—I'll sit down with the local editors. We'll meet in person in a coffee shop.

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—Pretty much decide day-to-day what goes on the site and what stories you want to cover, who to assign it to.

—I go out and cover a lot of the different things in town, and I also manage a team of freelancers, work a lot of nights in a week if there's a lot of things to cover at night.

—It's not just a job for us, it's a lifestyle.

—They have to know all the new media tools as well, obviously. They have to know how to shoot videos and edit videos. They have to know how to use Twitter intelligently.

—You're a mobile newsroom—portable power, laptop, cell phone, camera.

—You can decide how you tell a story. You can use video, photography.

—Part of what I love most about Patch is the freedom that we have to really make the site as great as we want it to be.

—It gave me a really good opportunity to kind of pursue the stories that I'm interested in.

—Being part of a business growing at warp speed is a ton of fun.

—You're taking a job that involves journalism, which by itself is exciting, and then you're taking the startup mode and you're combining the two.

—The life of a Patch editor can be glamorous, it can be arduous.

—We're right here all the time.

—“Hey, are you the Patch guy?”

—“There's the Patch girl.”

—We're approachable, and we're in your communities, and everything you need is right here. We want to hear from you, and I think that's the biggest thing.

[Video ends.]

Great. So, that pretty much puts it in context. There's no time that I ever feel more in touch with what Patch is doing than when I go out and spend time with our local editors. It's really cool. Because what it is, is the

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intersection of all the traditional values of journalism, but in a totally new context with great technology and the efficiencies of a nationwide technology company.

So, a little bit of history. Back in 2007 or early 2008, we started looking at the fact that, for example, in my hometown in Connecticut, if you need to know what's going on at the school, or there's a fair going on down the street, or you're making voting decisions, you're really slowing down in the median to see the sign that somebody has put up and said, "There's a fair going on down the street." It was amazing to us that when you go onto the web there's just not a lot of consistent information when it comes down to neighborhood level. There's a lot sort of regional, countywide, statewide, national, but when it gets down to your neighborhood, it was very disorganized. Nothing had been digitized consistently across the country. So, we thought, this is a huge, huge problem and a huge opportunity. How do we solve it?

A guy, Chris Anderson, who is the author of *The Long Tail* and Editor-in-Chief of *Wired Magazine*, he's a guy who's come [to Patch], and I admire him very much. He came and spoke to all of our editors and businesspeople at Patch. And he has a theory about people's interest. That people are fascinated by what goes on and need to know what goes on within ten miles of their home. When you get to 10,000 miles, when you're talking about global and down to national and national politics and things that affect the whole country, people are fascinated by that too. But when you think about 100 miles, you're just not that interested in sort of your greater region. You want to know your neighborhood, and you want to know the things that affect you. And this is up for debate, obviously, but the interesting thing about this is that when we started building Patch, we realized that most traditional media sit squarely in that 100-mile box, and that's just not where people are—or what we believe people are looking for.

We started thinking about why, and we realized that the history of the daily newspaper has to do with how far the trucks could get in the morning reasonably and how many papers they could get at a certain hour out to the right number of people. It didn't have so much to do with what people were interested in or the breadth or scope of the coverage. Same with broadcast. It was how far could the signal reach originally. And I think we're dealing with the legacy of that right now. So, Patch wants to sit squarely in that ten-mile radius. We think that's where the most interest is.

So, we look at ourselves.... To Vivian Schiller's point, you know, is this real journalism? I say, yes. I mean, we hired people who all have journalism backgrounds. They have an average of nine years experience in a newsroom or news organization. The majority of them have journalism degrees. And we hold them to the same traditional journalistic standards that any news organization would. We just give them different tools, different platform.

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And when we think about what Patch is, is it just a news site? No, that's not what we want it to be. We want it to be a real platform where we're digitizing the town and giving people tools. We're really the concierge of the web to be able to find out the ten most important things you need to know any time of day or night about what goes on in your neighborhood around you. And that might be breaking local news. It might be data. It might be things as simple as the menu at the school. You know, you want to know what your kids are going to eat this week. And the conversation. We don't want it to be just push. We want it to be a conversation with people in the community and Patch be a platform.

We look at what we're doing as similar to what Facebook did when they built the infrastructure for social on the web. They and others, but Facebook is the winner there. We want Patch to be the winner in building infrastructure on the web for local. This is the platform where anything that happens digitally locally happens on patch.

So, a quick overview of what we are. We're local news. We have over... We were the largest hirer of journalists in 2010. That's something I'm really proud of. In a time when over 15,000 journalism jobs were lost since 2009, we were the largest hirer in the country and possibly the world. No one has been able to get me that stat, but I think to be able to hire nearly 1,000 journalists in a year, it was quite a feat. People thought we couldn't actually do it. And I think the example of our speed dating is a good one. But we hired a lot of journalists and they are out embedded in their local community producing local news.

We do have some regional news. The great thing with the network effect of Patch is that if there's something that is interesting in the town next door, we have a very easy way to cross publish that on Patch.

Our local journalist is, first and foremost, the key differentiator of Patch. People who have tried the hyperlocal solutions before that didn't have a local journalist; we just found that it didn't have that community connection. They are very much on Twitter. This is their Twitter feed up at the top of every page. So while they're in the zoning board meeting covering one thing, they are also tweeting about the story that's coming up in a few minutes. So, it's very real-time 24/7.

We found that events, local events, not surprisingly, are probably the most engaging content on our site, so we're doing more now about how to get more events on the site. About 50% of them are loaded up directly by the organizations who are hosting the event, which is great. Anything that we don't have to have our local editor do themselves is fantastic.

Local deals. This is important. So, everyone talks about Groupon and sort of winning this space. We think that the mission of Patch is to be the 10 most important things that you need to know anytime of day or night on any

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screen anywhere, not just a website. It could be mobile. It could be anywhere. News is part of it, events is part of it, but also commercial offerings. You need to know that the restaurant down the street is offering a 2-for-1 special. That's something that helps you live a better life in your town, and it's just as important as anything else.

And to that end, we're really about galvanizing the local business community. Before we launch any Patch sites, we send a team of people out into the market to digitize basically every business, take pictures, fill out custom fields of information about every business, park, playground, government office, you know, the schools. So, what we end up with is the most comprehensive database on the web for the towns that we cover. When we start, we take the best information that's out there. We find that it's on average 30% wrong. So if you go to a non-Patch town and look for data about businesses, you can be sure that whether it's on Google or anywhere else, it's going to be about 30% wrong or out of date. We clean that up. We send people out to make sure it's perfect.

And, community engagement--this is critically important for us. We want this to be a platform where all voices are shared and have a place for that. So, we are building more and more tools onto the site for anyone who has an opinion, a thought, a need, a request. Get it up on Patch and you'll get it answered.

Here's an example. It's kind of fun. We've found officially six lost dogs since we launched Patch, which is great. [Laughter] Here's somebody named Steve Mochel. Owners of a local business found a dog running loose. We posted it on Patch. That was on March 18th. At 5:15 on March 18th, we got a comment saying, "She's been claimed 30 minutes ago thanks to this post. Thank you." So, that's the kind of real time, cool stuff that we can do on Patch aside from the journalism. It's really your community platform. It's the place you go. It's the infrastructure. It's the equivalent to the pipes that Facebook is building for your friends. We're building it for local.

Here's another probably more critical piece of what we do. The FBI and every other agency you can think of was looking for this missing 13-year-old in Orange, Connecticut. Posted it on Patch. As soon as there's updates, and the girl had thankfully been found, like, it gets updated right to Patch. Where typically you might need to wait for your weekly newspaper to come out to hear this information, we've got it immediately. [Recording stops/starts.] ...really be useful and necessary.

So, the stats. We're in 800 towns right now. Our towns or neighborhoods are communities of 15,000 to about 100,000. And we try to define them as the place where you consider that you live. How do we judge success? We're not looking for millions and millions and millions of UVs [Unique Visitors] overall. We judge our success one site at a time, and the percentage of the population that we cover in that community. So, we think 50% is a good

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measuring stick. If we can get to 50% of the equivalent population in each one of our communities, we're doing really well.

We were shocked at how quickly that happened with very little marketing other than just having the editor there at the soccer game, at the zoning board meeting, at the school board meeting, seen in the coffee shop. The penetration in our first three towns went up to the equivalent of 86 to 96% of the population. And we're seeing a similar trend with all the sites that we've launched since then.

We're growing in monthly visits...this is actually outdated. We're growing this month. March over February was 42% increase. So, people are coming. We're going to have...I think in March we ended up with 10-million, just under 10-million unique visitors to Patch. And for 800 mostly brand-new local sites, we're pretty happy about that.

When we started Patch, we knew that we could go anywhere. We knew that it's really just the technology we could turn on. I could turn on 1,000 Patch sites right now from here if we wanted to. But we wanted to make sure as a startup, before we were acquired by AOL, that we went to the communities that we had the best chance of success. And we tried to think about what that meant. And it's kind of the obvious things. It's engagement, civic engagement, voter turnout. People who are.... Towns where people really care about where they live.

So, we built, like Googlers at the time, an algorithm, and we weighted 59 different factors including the ranking of the local public high school. And we thought that that would be an indicator of a really engaged group of parents, people who are really excited about where their kids go to school. We ranked communities by voter turnout rates, by income, by number of kids in the household, by the retail spent in the community.

So, we built this great algorithm, and then we realized that since Patch didn't exist yet, there was no great consistent data across the country to get it at all that stuff. So, the best data we could come up with was the census tract information. So, we took all 66,000 census tracts in America, ran them through this algorithm, filtered them by the population range, the 15-to-100,000 population that we thought Patch could cover. That gave us a rank ordered list. Texas, p.s., came in very high; although, we haven't gotten here yet. We're looking forward to it. And it gave us what we feel was a list of the most attractive, engaged neighborhoods in the country.

We plotted them on a map, looked for clustering. Our model depends on, first of all, going big, and second of all, clustering for management efficiencies and efficiencies of resources. And then the art part of this was sending people out to meet people from each of those communities and make sure that it's a -- you know, there's something not showing up and

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tweaking our algorithm. We wanted to get to know people and know that these are really engaged communities. So, that's how we got to our list.

I think when people ask, what do you do differently that other scaled technology companies have not been able to crack this code—the code of local. I think it really does come down to the fact that we want to be not just a national and international media company, we want to be a Main Street business, and we're completely embedded in the communities that we serve. And that means attending events, volunteering.... Volunteerism is a huge part of what we do. We give five paid days per year of our employees' time in a program called Give Five, where everyone goes out and volunteers at a charity in their local community. We want to be Main Street business and we want to be the international, global media company that can one town at a time put people back online and get this information out.

So again, I think this is one of the most exciting times in our industry. I've never read about or heard of a period where so quickly things have changed and so dramatically. And to be a part of that is incredibly exciting. It's great to be here in particular, because we love, love, love working with journalism schools. And with anyone in the academic side of things or the research side of things, we think that the best innovation is going to come from journalism schools and from people who are studying this problem, and we want to be very close to that. So, we have a program called Patch University, where we have 140 journalism schools from across the U.S. who partner with us in various ways. We want to keep that going. We want to work with the University of Texas and every other group of people who is out there trying with us to solve the local problem.

So, that's Patch. I'd love to answer any questions I can about what we're doing or the industry in general.

[Applause.]

Thank you. Hi.

Jonathan Groves: I was curious....

Warren Webster: Hot mike.

Jonathan Groves: Jonathan Groves, Drury University. I was curious in terms of pay, [chuckles], how much do you pay your Patch editors, and does it vary by market, or how do you go about it?

Warren Webster: Great question. So, we don't publicly disclose exact numbers, but what I can tell you is that we pay our local editors what they would -- in some cases more than what they would make at a community weekly or daily. So, we have a staff that 75% of our local journalists make the same or more than they did at their previous journalism job. So, we feel

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like we're paying really competitively. We knew when we got into this that there's one thing we can't skimp on and that's paying for good journalism. And we believe that people should get paid for journalism. So, I hope that helps answer your question.

Jonathan Groves: Well, can you at least say what percentage of your expenses go to payroll?

Warren Webster: The vast majority. Yeah, I think our corporate expense is something like 8% of our overall expense, and corporate being our people in New York City, our engineering. The tech is virtually nothing. I mean, there's not a lot of sort of nuts and bolts infrastructure behind what we do. It's really all people and technology.

Jonathan Groves: Do you give them benefits?

Warren Webster: We do. They're full-time employees. They have health, vision, dental, all the good stuff, stock options sometimes, depending on which level they are. So, yeah.

Jonathan Groves: Thank you.

Warren Webster: Thanks.

Josh Benton: Hi.

Warren Webster: Hi.

Josh Benton: I'm Josh Benton from the Nieman Journalism Lab. I have two questions.

Warren Webster: Great.

Josh Benton: Last year in an interview with one of our writers, Ken Doctor, you said that Patch could generate an equivalent amount of journalism to what a local newspaper could at about 4.1% of the cost, so about 1/25th of the cost. And I'd just like to hear a little bit about if you could elaborate a little bit more on where the cost savings are. Obviously, there are some obvious ones—you know, you don't have offices and those sorts of things.

Warren Webster: Right.

Josh Benton: But just a little bit more about how you're able to achieve what seems like really extraordinary cost savings. And the second one I just forgot, so how about that one?

Warren Webster: Well, I'll start with that one. So yes, 4.1. When we looked at how to build Patch, we looked at the profit and loss statements of

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newspapers, television, anybody who was doing local news. And we looked at the average P&L basically of a small daily newspaper in a community about the same size as where we are. And we picked out all the AP content, and we picked out all the things that were coming from other places, and [we] got down to the number of stories that were actually being produced by the team of journalists that they had in that town. And we looked at what it would cost for us to do that without a building, without trucks, ink, printing press, distribution, you know, a lot of marketing expense, a lot of just general overhead, and that's mainly what it is, and just a lot less people. And we got to 4.1% of the cost.

Some of the things that we do that help us get there are what I was mentioning about the clustering, so every 12 to 15 Patch sites work in a cluster. They're writing for their own site, but they report to a regional editor, and there's a lot of sharing of resources. Sharing of things like a calendar editor, who might be a freelance writer, freelance budgets to get more content from other people, and that's what gets us down to the 15—or, sorry, 4.1%.

Josh Benton: Great. The other question was actually related to your mention of marketing as an expense you don't have to worry about quite as much as some others might.

Warren Webster: Yeah.

Josh Benton: You know, one of the benefits of a local newspaper is that they have an advertisement on every street corner downtown in the form of a newspaper box, --

Warren Webster: Right.

John Benton: -- which is something that Patch doesn't have the benefit of.

Warren Webster: Yeah.

John Benton: With *The Huffington Post* acquisition, can you talk a little bit about what I imagine would be—or what seems like would be very logical—would be the ability to use the other AOL properties to drive traffic to local Patch resources, --

Warren Webster: Yeah.

John Benton: -- where you were talking about.

Warren Webster: Fair question. So, we're really, really careful about where we get our traffic from. It would be very easy since we were acquired by AOL to just point the AOL fire hose at Patch, and our traffic would look amazing, but those are not the people that we necessarily want to be there. We want

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to make sure that it's local, it's useful to local people, and that any traffic we get is coming from actual people who want to be on that particular Patch site. So, we do things where it makes sense. MapQuest is another AOL property. So when you look at a trip on MapQuest, if you plot out a trip and you go through a Patch town, you're going to see Patch content listings particularly show up on MapQuest. If you indicate on the AOL homepage that you are in a certain zip code, which changes your home page to show you your own weather, your own gas prices, your own whatever, you're going to get a feed of Patch content. So, the percentage of traffic that comes from AOL is fairly small, relative to everywhere else. The majority comes just direct.

Facebook is a growing. You know, I look at Facebook and social as like the new Internet-age version of that box sitting on the street corner. That's where we put out our shingle. We've got our Facebook fan page like everybody else, and a lot of people find us that way. So, I hope that answers your question.

Josh Benton: Great. Thanks.

Warren Webster: Why don't you take one from this side?

Mark: Hi. I'm Mark [inaudible] with *The Austin American-Statesman*. Hello.

Warren Webster: *Austin American Statesman*, all right.

Mark: I may have misunderstood the answer to the first question, but I think you were asked what reporters make and you answered what editors make.

Warren Webster: Oh, well, I'm sorry. Patch in glossary, we call our reporters editors. They are the editor of their local site. We only have one full-time person per site, and they are the editor, reporter, everything, photographer, videographer. They do it all, so we call them local editors.

Mark: And in hiring the 1,000 last year, I mean, were there like minimum experience levels? What were the qualifications that they would have had?

Warren Webster: Yeah. We have some that came right out of journalism school that are some of our best editors. We have some that had 30 years experience in a major daily newsroom that are some of our best editors, so it was a mix. We looked at a whole bunch of things, like, we gave them an editing and reporting test. We looked at their education, the places that they worked before. We were pretty thorough. Even though we hired so many people at once, we were pretty thorough. But what we ended up with was our local editor/reporter had nine years experience when you average it all out, and then the regional management level was more like 12 years average. And it goes up from there.

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Mark: Thank you.

Warren Webster: Sure. Hi.

Pat Thomas: Hi. I'm Pat Thomas from the University of Georgia. And our Athens, Georgia Patch went live on March 18th.

Warren Webster: Yes! Very exciting. Go dogs.

Pat Thomas: Then on March 22nd there was a cop killing. And I have to say that Rebecca McCarthy, the editor who has newspaper experience, assisted by a former editor of *The Red and Black*, our independent college newspaper, whipped the pants off of every other media outlet.

Warren Webster: *Banner Herald*.

Pat Thomas: Yes, you having worked for Morris know *The Banner Herald*.

Warren Webster: Yeah. [chuckles]

Pat Thomas: And it was primarily Rebecca and Daniel's use of Twitter on the site that made them.... In terms of immediacy, there was no one close to them.

Warren Webster: That's great to hear.

Pat Thomas: I'm sure your penetration in that market soared. It was everything I heard from my local Facebook friends.

Warren Webster: That's great. That's great. That's so good.

Pat Thomas: It was amazing. But now having said that and been really sweet to you, I just want to say I have been a little disappointed, because the regional editor, Perry Parks, who used to do some teaching at my journalism school, --

Warren Webster: Yeah.

Pat Thomas: -- came and recruited my students to write for local Patches—they're health and medical journalism graduate students—aiming to get some health coverage into these local marketplaces. And he told them that they'd be paid for their work, but when pay has come up with the local editors, that's been a sticking point. And even the modest amounts of \$100 a story that Perry told them they could expect—not happening.

Warren Webster: Really? Okay.

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Pat Thomas: And I'm wondering whether this is a consequence of, you know, some uncertainty about the economic model and...you know, what can our students expect? I'd love to have mine doing health coverage --

Warren Webster: Sure.

Pat Thomas: -- for these local outlets.

Warren Webster: Well, that's a great question, and thank you. I can explain a little bit about how that works. So just to clarify, the local editor full-time position is one thing, but we also have on average about 12 freelance writers per site. And in places like Athens where there's a big university and a journalism school, we often work with the journalism schools to get students to write for us.

Pat Thomas: You're actually not working with us. I think that this was....

Warren Webster: Oh, this was separate? Okay.

Pat Thomas: *The Red and Black* is an independent corporation.

Warren Webster: Oh, working with *The Red and Black*, okay. Well, we're paying students basically to write stories.

Pat Thomas: Sometimes.

Warren Webster: So whether they're students or not, we're constantly looking at the freelance budget, basically, for each site. We have to operate each site like it's its own little media company. And we start to learn over time. Most of the sites are brand new. And we can sit back in New York and we will not have idea what is important in Athens from New York. That needs to be decided by the people in Athens. But what we can do in New York is start to see, you know, if we have an aggregate amount of freelance dollars of 'X,' and we can see the data that they're investing in Athens in all this stuff that nobody is looking at—I'm making this up—but we can start to say, "Okay, we need to do less of this and a little bit more of that," and just give those tools and resources to the editors. So, it gets perceived as over-slashing the budget of the freelance writers. That's actually not the case. The aggregate amount of freelance dollars has not changed at all at Patch. What's changed is just the way we apply them. We're such an infant of a company that we need to constantly be looking at what is working, looking at the data, [and] what's resonating with readers. We definitely don't want an unfortunate byproduct to be these poor students who should be getting paid as much as they can, and we should look at that. But to answer you question, no, it's not a reflection of our, you know, view of the model, so much as how we apply the dollars that are in the model.

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Pat Thomas: Well, I think the students with the good stories would think of the local Patches first if there was some consistency across --

Warren Webster: Yeah.

Pat Thomas: -- community sites. There are three in our neighborhood.

Warren Webster: Fair enough. And I think that's a great point and we should look at that. We're in the mode of try everything, see how it works, and move on. So, thank you.

Rosental Calmon Alves: Next question, please.

Warren Webster: Last question.

Carol Adams-Means: Okay, and you will have a Patch for that. [Laughter] Okay. I'm Carol Adams-Means. I'm at Huston-Tillotson University. This goes to anyone within the sound of my voice. We are a small university right down the street from the big tower, and we are in the process of reinstating our Communication Program. It's been basically on hiatus since 2000. So, we've missed all of the fallout and all of that of what it's going to be in the future as far as media. So, she's pretty much answered many of the questions I had, but I would be interested in learning more about working with Patch. Definitely we don't want our students to be exploited, --

Warren Webster: Sure.

Carol Adams-Means: -- but I also think there's opportunity here. And that goes for anybody else who's doing the hot, latest thing, you know, in media.

Warren Webster: Yeah.

Carol Adams-Means: One of the advantages is we haven't had to deal with traditional media because we've been basically on vacation for about eleven years. So, point is, as we reinstate, I'm thinking more in terms of the experience of media versus the gadgets, gizmos, and so forth. So, anybody here—and I know Rosental wants to go on—anybody here in terms of going experiential, because we're still very text-driven here.

Warren Webster: Sure. So, I'm glad you brought that up, because we want to work with every school, every organization that wants to work with us. The best way—I know we have to close it up—to get in touch with me is Warren@Patch.com and I'll make sure that we get the right people involved in getting you the partnership that would make sense. So, I'm just speaking for Patch. I'm sure there's others.

Rosental Calmon Alves: All right. Thank you, Warren Webster.

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Warren Webster: Well, thank you. Thanks very much.

[Applause.]