

13th Annual International Symposium on Online Journalism

Day 2, April 21, 2012: Afternoon Session - 2:30-4:00 p.m. *From SEO to SMO: The increasing impact on social media on journalism*

Chair: **Dan Gillmor**, Founding Director of the Knight Center for Digital Media Entrepreneurship of Arizona State University

Panelists:

- **Carmen Cano**, Digital Managing Editor, The Dallas Morning News
- **Chip Cutter**, Content Editor, LinkedIn
- **Borja Echevarria**, Deputy Editor, El Pais, Spain
- **Jen Lee Reeves**, Interactive Director of KOMU-TV and Associate Professor of the Missouri School of Journalism

Q & A: Dan Gillmor and the Panelists

Dan Gillmor: I'm sure others have done this, but I want to thank Rosental and your team for doing an amazing thing at this conference. This is great. Thank you.

[Cheers and applause.]

Dan Gillmor: And one of the things that I think is best about this is that this is not just the usual suspects. This is the most diverse group of people in the business and related parts that I've been around in a long time. That's one of the other great values of this. Thank you again.

So, we have a social media panel. And I don't know who's planning to go first.

Rosental Calmon Alves: We will stay with the program.

Dan Gillmor: Oh, OK, we'll follow the order. How about that? So, I'll just quickly introduce some thoughts that I sent to the panelists ahead of time, and I don't know if we're going to hear much about any of these things. And if we don't, I'll probably put it in the Q&A. But I'm curious about how we're using social media to tell and to sell our stories as journalists. That seems part of it. The leveraging of the speed of the networks that we're using. The high velocity of this information for good and bad, and we've seen plenty of both. The question that may not come up now, but I do want to come back to, which is, how we're relying on other companies' infrastructures, and we are becoming part of *them* in the process of doing social media, as much as using their tools. And that raises, for me, a lot of questions that we might want to come back to. Social in a lot of ways is about reputation. And what is reputation doing for us in the online sphere? And how do we leverage that

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and think about it in the context of the journalism that we've been doing for a long time and are going to do in the future?

So, let me start. I'm not sure how to pronounce this. Carmen Cano?

Carmen Cano: Perfect.

Dan Gillmor: Carmen Cano from the Dallas Morning News. And we'll jump right in. Thanks.

Carmen Cano: Hello, everyone. Thank you so much for having me here. How are you doing? It's by the end of the day on Saturday. [laughter] So, I hope that this doesn't put you to sleep. From SEO to SEE. I was thinking about coming here and talking to you, and I decided that, you know, we don't have enough acronyms in the industry, so we needed one more. [laughter] I hope that by the end of this session, this acronym makes as much sense as most of the other that we know about.

So, we have spent in the last few years a lot of time working and talking about SEO. And in many ways, we pay attention to SEO out of fear. Out of fear of this, right? If we build it, will they come? [On the screen: "If a tree falls in the forest and no one is around to hear it ... does it make a sound?" Audio of a tree falling in the woods and a man yelling.] So, we believe that creating quality content did help to be relevant, that inventing marquee words will help people to find us, and all the stuff about linking to us. And we all know about this.

But when you think about it, it's like, what is SEO really? What does it mean? So, I asked my dad. [laughter] [On the screen: A picture of her dad with SEO defined as Senior Entertainment Offers.] [laughter/applause]

Rosental Calmon Alves: This looks like Rosental. [laughter]

Carmen Cano: Our marketing guru says he is wrong. This is Search Engine Optimization. I really like my dad's version better. And why? Because I like my dad. [laughter] And you better like my dad, because you are going to hear about him again today, because my dad is almost 80 years old. He has an iPad. He's on Facebook. He is a very simple and sophisticated person. He speaks Spanish only. He travels around the world without any problem. He is ridiculously funny. And he takes no bullshit. Like, he is just simply honest and very, very smart.

Why that matters. Let's stop here for a minute and I'm going to ask you something. Let's pay attention to what is going to happen in the screen. Watch. [On the screen: A timer goes from 00:00 to 00:01.] What happened? We watched one second pass. Doing nothing but looking at me, right? You're all sitting there. This is what happened out there. Two new people signed up in LinkedIn, 11 Twitter accounts were created, more than 2,000 tweets were

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published, more than 3,000 people's photos were uploaded to Flickr, 8,000 comments in Facebook, and more than 10,000 searches. I hope this is true. I did the research. [laughter] It's pretty scary, because we were doing not much during that time, right? So, social media matter and the transition and implications of social and search are clear.

I have a few more facts that someone throughout the sessions did show you a graphics [of], and I don't want to go through all of these things, but YouTube is the second largest search engine today. Pinterest, Facebook. So, we have been working on SEO and now we have one more thing to do. And we hear about this new thing that is SMO. So, I asked my dad again. [laughter] [On the screen: A picture of her dad with SMO defined as Senior Medical Offers.] And of course, this smart guy says "No, it's Social Media Optimization." And that did crack me up.

When I think about social media optimization, I think, what is that? Why are there acronyms? Is the science getting in the way of the art of relationships? So, let's imagine this in the real world. And you get your friend [to] come to your party, one of your best friends, and said, "You know, I have been working on optimizing my relationship with you." [laughter] "So, my metrics show that 45% of the time you are more agreeable with me at 8:00 a.m. in the morning than at 4:00 p.m. in the afternoon when I used to call you. So, I'm going to start..." And I would think, "I don't want to be this guy's friend." [laughter] Right? And the point is, I think that the terms, the places, the destinations where we are supposed to be doing this social media is getting in our way to be genuine about connecting and making a strong relationship with our audience. I think it's all about being genuine, and it's all about relationships.

When you look at search, it's relationships among words. When you look at social, it's relationships among people. I don't know what this means, and I don't want to come through as, you know, I'm dismissing all of these. At the Dallas Morning News, we actually put in place an SEO specialist recently, so that SEO is not the project. It's way too late. Why are we talking about this? It's a skill that we need to have.

We have a community manager and a social media person, and we have a very active community. We incorporated—social media involves everyone in the newsroom. Everyone has to tweet, like someone was saying before. Everyone has to use Facebook or LinkedIn or be there where the conversation is happening. We launched some social media guidelines that don't sound like the FBI is going to come after you if you get this wrong. Right? It's not a policy. They are just guidelines supported.

And we have a program called Voices that is about 70 active volunteers that write columns and contribute with us. When I look back at the number of older contributors in this Voice Program, we have about 600. So, you know, making these things systematic is important. I'm not dismissing that.

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We are.... This is better? [Technical difficulties.] So, we are.... Did I break it? [laughter] I break things. So, we have been talking to our marketing and our newsroom about the difference between LinkedIn and Twitter and Facebook and how Facebook is not so much about breaking news. It's more about the conversation. Closer? [Moves microphone closer.] OK. We are making our presence in Facebook simpler and more strategic, and we are seeing some results. We are using OpenGraph. We implemented Facebook comments a week ago. Good luck to us. But we are seeing actually some traction already. The quality of the conversation did improve dramatically.

We are using tools to measure. I know that we have to measure and look at what is working and what is not working. Some interesting tools out there about measuring social resonance. People are talking about what we write or say in places that is not our house; it's not our sites.

We have published 12 eBooks in the last three months. And this is what is happening. We can talk more about the eBook thing which has been refreshing in the newsroom, because we went from, you know, I write an article this long to post in a blog this short to Facebook, shorter, to Twitter, shorter, so to get long stories into eBooks has been very refreshing in the newsroom. But, you know, you see what happened in Amazon. It's outside of our properties. We don't have any control. We publish through Amazon and people are commenting and reviewing. That is part of social media.

So, you all know this. The point is just you cannot ignore social media for SEO. But we are farther along. I think that we have to be more genuine about how we are doing that.

So, what is SEE? SEE is what it is. It's SEE. I asked my dad one last time. [laughter] [On the screen: A picture of her dad with SEE defined as Senior Education Enrollment.] He is wrong here. Here is the message. If there is anything that I want to talk about social media and SEO and all these things, it's, you know, we have to really understand what it is and be genuine and honest about it. Trickiness didn't help. SEE is Social and it's Search and it's Semantic. It's all relationships. Relationships between words or between people or between objects. They have to be Excellent. And after our previous speaker, Engaging. And it's all about the Experience. It's not about optimizing anything. It's about providing a great experience.

And it's not just in Facebook and in LinkedIn and in the full site social media. It's on eBooks. It's in your marketing messages. It's in events. It's in apps. It's about seeing. It's about people and relationships and experiences. You cannot optimize that. Our sites [and] our products, as publishers, are less and less destinations. [They] are a journey. And I hope that as publishers we see ourselves as a great partner throughout that journey in our house or wherever our audiences decides to stop.

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Thank you.

[Applause.]

Chip Cutter: OK, great. Well, I really loved Carmen's SEE acronym. I think that's a great way to put it. What I want to talk a little bit about today is kind of what problem we're trying to solve at LinkedIn. We call it "the final mile" problem. And then I'm going to talk about how we're moving from Search Engine Optimization to Social Media Optimization. So, this final mile problem in journalism. It's you go around. You write a great story. If you are a reporter or you're a blogger, it doesn't matter where you are. You write a great story, but how do you get that in front of the right audience? And that's the challenge we're trying to solve.

So about a year ago, we launched a social news product called LinkedIn Today. This is an example of it. And it's based entirely on what's being shared. And so, we take it into three areas: 1) what's being shared among your connections, so people you know; 2) what's being shared in your industry, so I'm in online media, for example, so I want to know what other people in online media area sharing, but I can follow other industries if I'm interested in restaurants or whatever; 3) and then the third area is what's being shared beyond your industry. We worry that, you know, you're only going to see a very limited amount. That's something we talk about in journalism a lot that you're getting a very narrow world view, so we wanted to go beyond that. What's trending across LinkedIn? What's popular?

And this is all part of our effort to make professionals great at what they do. And so, to be great at what you do, you need to know what's happening in your industry. So, that's part of our effort. And we link out directly to publishers. This has got more than 300,000 publishers who now have our in-share button on their sites, which is what drives LinkedIn Today, in addition to people sharing stories directly within LinkedIn or in groups or other areas. And then we also, our referral traffic to publishers is up about 45% quarter over quarter. So, we're driving traffic to publishers. That's one way that we're moving from SEO to SMO.

But I kind of want to talk about, what does it mean to optimize your news for social media? The first point I'll make is that you've got to let the community do some of the work for you. In social media, this really works. So, this is an example of an accounting publication called Accounting Today. And they put up a slideshow on their website about outrageous tax deductions. And they had lots of photos, and it was a good slideshow and everything like that. But what they wanted to do was figure out not only how to drive page views, but how to drive engagement and how to get the conversation around their piece.

So, their Editor-in-Chief, his name is Mike Cone, he put a link into one of our really active accounting groups. There's 500,000 people in this group. It's a

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pretty vibrant community. But he did something really smart. He started a.... He put a question at the end. This is essential for all publishers who are thinking about how to make your stuff work in social. He asked, "What are some of the weirdest tax deductions you've ever seen?" And he asked this in a community of accountants where they're dying to tell you how their clients are trying to scam the IRS or trying to do something they're not supposed to do. So, we got a lot of interesting examples. The best one was condoms, handcuffs, whips, and lingerie from somebody. We heard about clients trying to use their dog as an expense. Everything from speedboats.... So, we had a lot of different examples here. Well, Mike and the people at Accounting Today, they saw this. They took all these examples from LinkedIn. They created another slideshow on their site, "More Wacky Tax Deductions." So, they had good photos there. They did all of this again. And then you can imagine where this is going. They created this additional slideshow and then posted that back into the group. So, this is very much the model that I think that works in a lot of ways if you're trying to drive engagement. It's post engage, post engage. The cycle really doesn't have to end.

So, one thing that's important to note here is that the reason it worked is, you know, we talk a lot about wanting to start this viral loop, but you want to start a credible viral loop. So, he had really good responses in this group. That's partly because linked in, your profile is attached to your professional — it's part of your professional identity. So, we're less likely to have the examples that we talked about in the panel yesterday of comments going off the wall and anonymous gripers talking about Hitler and other things. So, that's something to think about when you're putting your stuff in social media. Where can you develop a credible conversation around it?

The next is thinking about what content really does well on social media. And what we're finding on LinkedIn is that passion and obsession sell. That's what does well on social media, and that's what starts to trend on our site and others. So, here's an example of that. As you know, everybody was covering SOPA earlier this year, the Stop Online Piracy Act. Traditional media outlets covered this really well, but Mashable did something interesting here. They were looking for a way to cover this, and they came up with, they asked their chief software architect to go through SOPA line by line and to ask, you know, just to analyze it for readers. Now, this is someone who hasn't written at all for Mashable before. He's not a traditional reporter. But his piece generated a tremendous amount of traffic on LinkedIn and other sites, because he's passionate. He knows a tone about technology. He's obsessed with the details here. And that sells.

And kind of while we're on this slide, it's probably good to mention these share counters over here. A lot of sites use this now. We would say this is a really good, good practice for newsrooms to get in. And the reason is it's kind of this whole social proof theory that we talked about. You know, we like to follow the crowd. If we see that other people are sharing things, we probably

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think that's a good idea, and these counters are going to give people another incentive to share. So, that's something they did well.

Another thing—and Mashable does this really well all the time—if you want your stuff to work well on social media, you're asking questions and you're diving into the comments. You know, I came from the associated press. I was a reporter there. I understand it's really hard to kind of piece away time from reporters to do some of the stuff, but he was in the comments answering questions, providing additional details, and then also asking additional questions to keep the conversation going forward. That's key.

Finally, moving from SEO to SMO means it also changes how you get ideas and how you kind of tailor your reporting. So for instance, the SEO way is that you find a popular topic, and you refine your keywords, you refine your headline around that. So, something happens with Justin Bieber or the Real Housewives or some other popular topic, and you want to write your story in a way that's going to show up in a Google news search. It's basically to get traffic that way. So, you're basically trying to latch on to a really broad topic. With social media and the data that we have now, you're able to kind of really tailor your stories based on what users are sharing and what industries they're in. You can really kind of hone your reporting and find ideas in a different way.

So, this is a good example. A couple of weeks ago this was the top shared story among biotech professionals. And basically, the story was that a lot of drug companies are finding that cancer discoveries in university research labs aren't really working for them. They can't replicate the studies that are coming out of the university labs. And that's significant for a lot of reasons, but also basically because it hurts drug development. So, this was a story all the data was shared at Roche and Genentech and other companies. So, if I'm a biotech reporter, I really care about this. I care that this is a story that they're sharing internally at some of these big drug companies. So, it probably shows to me that there's additional angles to explore. There's more I can get out of this.

Same way. There's tons—we've talked about this at the conference—but there's all different kinds of communities where you can see what people in your beat are talking about. And this is a good way to kind of help drive your coverage a little bit. This is a real estate group on LinkedIn. You know, we're going into the spring selling season. If I'm a real estate reporter, I want to know what real estate agents are talking about. This is one question they posed: When does it make sense to take an overpriced listing? Now, if I'm a business reporter, I might not think this is a big deal. Who cares about overpriced listings? But this was a tremendous discussion there. And they made a point that even if you know a property is overpriced, maybe it still makes sense to take it to get new clients. They had lots of other discussions. So, I might be able to get story ideas out of this. So, that's just a way that

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social media helps you to kind of hone your reporting, to help you find ideas in a way that's different than SEO.

Finally, just a couple of nuts and bolts things. Carmen mentioned Pinterest. Obviously, you want to share frequently. It should be a part of your day. Every practice you should be, after you finish a story, you're sharing it. You're hoping to become an expert in your field, so people know to look for your stuff. The second is to ensure that every story has a high quality image attached to it. This is something that LinkedIn does. We have, you know, big, nice images that are next to your story and then linked out to your site. But also we're hearing a lot from news organizations that if they want to have a Pinterest strategy, you've got to have high quality images attached to your stories to look good on Pinterest. So, this is not just us, this is other social networks.

Finally, it's also changing — social media is also changing how you write headlines. It's no longer just trying to cram everything in there to kind of.... Obviously, SEO is still tremendously important. You want to have that in there, but headlines in social media are often more about what starts a conversation. So, that's asking a question or posing something in a way that's going to drive engagement. So, it's important to think about that as well.

And that's it. So, I appreciate your time. Thanks.

[Applause.]

Borja Echevarria: Hi. Hello. Good afternoon. Well, this story, the headline is "The Lazarus Effect." I will explain it later, no? "The surprises of SMO (not always nice)." Not always nice for journalists. OK. I will say this is the homepage of El Pais. On the left side, I highlighted this has to do something with the question that Dan made before, "What about relying all of our tools in other companies?" No? I think we can speak later, as you said, in the questions and answer, no?

Because El Pais, we built it two years ago, our own social network. Of course, we're not trying to compete with Twitter or Facebook, but trying to have all the data of our users. Well, I can explain later our experience, no? Well, over the last 12 years I've been working in online journalism in big newsrooms, but also in a new startup that suddenly died just one week after we were awarded here in the United States in 2007. And I have to confess one thing: I never paid attention to SEO. Never in my life. I never hired a person for SEO in that startup. And the person in charge in El Pais in SEO, he sits next to the IT team in another floor completely different than to the newsroom. Of course, I know the engineers, they are doing their job as good as they can. So, I rely on them that people will find our stories all over the website. And of course, paying is not like you in the United States. Google News is not so important. It doesn't have a very big influence in our content, no? And well,

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I'm probably mistaken; although, many people, they are permanently working with the SEO. But I never wanted to play in that competition where everyone tries to put the same title for Google. Of course, that's another point. I think in a newsroom, and in a traditional newsroom, if you are playing that game the whole time, well, if you have some reputation, you will be destroyed very fast, no?

Well, a completely different thing is the SMO, no? I find it really journalistic, real exciting, easy to sell to journalists. And in the same way I said before that the guy that is working in the SEO in El Pais newsroom, he doesn't sit near the newsroom. The people that work in the Social Media Optimization, they are sitting in the main place in the newsroom. They are sitting next to the Editor-in-Chief of the newsroom. So for us, it's very important, and we are experimenting the whole day.

Journalists, they love showing news and they love selling themselves. We love selling ourselves in social media. But the truth is that SMO is not that simple, and it doesn't work all the time as we would like. Frequently, the control of our news, we lose it. I think we have lost the control.

Now, I'm going to explain what is the Lazarus Effect. OK. This is our page of the most viewed stories at El Pais. It will make sense later. OK. This is November 28, 2011. This was just one week afterwards the general elections in Spain. And this perhaps had already happened in your newsrooms, but at El Pais, it was really, really controversial when had happened, but not only El Pais. It was very controversial with our politicians and in the public opinion in Spain. As I told you, this is just eight days after general elections. The government had just changed from the Socialist Party that was governing, the conservatives, the Popular Party, they won the elections. And eight days later one morning, we found at El Pais that the most viewed story was this one: "The Popular Party brings to the senate an expert that says homosexuality is an illness." Well, that was the main story of the website in that box of the most viewed stories.

OK. But what particularity had this story? What didn't fit in this story? Well, the article was written six years before. It was the 21st of June of 2005. Well, at that time, there was a great debate in Spain about gay marriage and adoption. The Socialist Party approves a law permitting gay marriage. And the Popular Party decided to challenge the law in the constitutional tribunal. Well, now seven years later, we're still waiting for their decision.

OK. And this is where it happened. This is during 72 hours. That article, it was the most read article at El Pais. Well, probably, I think, in all Spanish language websites, because I think it was around 300,000 people went inside that news during those 72 hours. And it was the Facebook effect. No? It was not Twitter. All journalists, we're always in Twitter, but the real boom, it makes a real difference, it makes it Facebook. I'm sorry the quality is not so good. You can see we have like 130,000 recommendations in Facebook at

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the height, at the top is that. That was like 72 hours more or less, no? Well, we were very criticized by politicians, and also in the social networks, many people, they thought that we were manipulating. That because El Pais is a more left-wing newspaper, they thought we were using this news to harm the Popular Party that had just won the elections. So, what we decided, of course, is [to] explain it. I think this is one of the most important things you should do, you know, being transparent with your information, no?

So, what we decided to do. Well, first of all, we didn't remove it, the article. Even we didn't remove it from the box of the most viewed. No. We had lot of pressure, I remember, in those days inside the newsroom to take it away from there. Take it away. We decided not to do it. And we explained it inside the article there. It says, "This news was published in 2005. Virality made it the most viewed article in the web." And at the same time, we set our expert in audience, our analyst, to write a story in his blog about what was happening. He said, "Well, not so long ago we had a similar situation through Google. Those times have gone by and users have the power." 80% of the audience came from social networks, mostly through Facebook, and the 20%, they came through the box of the most viewed article.

The day afterwards, another blogger of El Pais, she was the one that named the effect. She called it "The Lazarus Effect" in a blog we have on El Pais that's called "Trending Topics." And it was not the first time that this happened in the last months. With two other articles, it happened, the same thing. Not so controversial as the other one, no. It had a political component, but it happened two times. And she tried to explain what was happening. And here I'm going to read something she wrote about. She said, "Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania have studied the least and the most sent articles of the New York Times and reached the conclusion that the common point of them are emotions. Emotions provoke actions and you make the effort to share." Well, this was the case. The emotions that gay marriage was provoking in Spain and the emotions of the government change in the 20 of November.

Well, here you can see some of the statistics of how it's growing in El Pais with people that are coming through social networks. Of course, Facebook is the one that is much bigger than Twitter, nearly double, but Twitter is growing a little bit more than Facebook.

How users land in the site. For El Pais still, our brand is so important. So important, you can see that more than 50% of the persons come through our homepage or they write El Pais in Google. And this is the average of the last 12 months. We have like nearly 6% of people coming through social networks to El Pais, no?

Well, after that story, well, I took four lessons of these Lazarus Effect, no? One is the enormous possibilities of social media. This is great and it's here to stay. The second one is that we have to accept we lost the control of our

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news. The third one, be transparent with your audience. This is very important. And the fourth, charge for your archive, because people love it.

OK. Thank you.

[Applause.]

Jen Lee Reeves: Ah, here we are. I didn't title it. [laughter] I didn't want to be too specific because I'm here to give you some — I'm going to kind of preach a little. I'm gonna give you some heart. Not gonna crowdsource. [laughter] We already did that. OK. So, Monday was Foursquare day. Did you know that? So, I have a Foursquare party in my town every year, because I love Foursquare. [laughs] I have a problem. So, a friend walks up to me and she gives me these rings. I'm wearing them. And she said that she got them and thought of me, because this is really very much how I feel and how I live as a journalist. And so, I'm here to tell you why I believe social media is how I'm able to build hope, inspire change, and give back as a journalist. [On the screen is a picture of the rings inscribed: "Build Hope, Inspire Change, Give Back.] Hmm. I as a journalist got into this business because I care. [laughs] I know. Isn't that ridiculous? [laughter] I know. I have to. They don't pay me enough any other way. So, I love telling stories and I love helping my community connect.

I'm in the news business when it comes to broadcast. Shh! [whispers] It's not bad. [normal voice] Broadcast is awesome, because I feel like I have a true connection with an audience. It's a huge audience! And I've been doing regional news for the majority of my career. And when you're a part of a market, you are more intrinsically involved just by being there. Viewers think you are a part of their house because you're in that television set. For years, we just spoke and you were a connection, just because we spoke. That's powerful. And I, as a producer, I like to be behind the scenes. I like being in charge. And so, I liked explaining to my journalists how to reach out, connect to the market, and learn what was important. Back in the day, that was a lot harder than it is now. If we really want to connect, if we really want to inspire, if we really want to help the market be a part of the community—and that can be whatever level of community you want it to be—we have to learn and take advantage of all of the tools that allow us to listen and connect.

And for broadcast, my newsroom's a little different. Let me tell you about it. I am a professor at the Missouri School of Journalism. I am also the Interactive Director at the NBC Affiliate, which happens to be owned by the University of Missouri. Faculty are the managers of the newsroom. I say grownups run the rest of the program. The whole newsroom is staffed by students. Other than the managers, we have full-time grownups as anchors. We have the standard sales department, production, [and] promotion. Our students are the content creators and the producers of our newscast.

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We are real, but we also have an unreal opportunity to push the limits of journalism, because in most newsrooms I have worked at, you don't have the opportunities to come to a conference like this. We don't have the opportunity to meet with the people in the industry on such a regular basis. And I'll be honest, I don't think I could have been in any other newsroom that lets me just think. [chuckles] It just doesn't happen that often. It happens a lot for me. And I feel very lucky that I was able to make the job that I have, and I feel lucky that I have the opportunity to think about newsrooms differently.

So in our newsroom, our students help me run the assignment desk. And people who run the assignment desk also help manage our online and social. It's blended together. All of our journalists are expected to use Twitter. And I'll tell you why. I love Twitter, but it's not because I love Twitter. I love its simplicity and ease of delivery. And with young journalists, I want them to use it so well that when something happens, they don't have to think about it. They know they need to deliver. And so on a daily basis, when they're going out and reporting, I expect ongoing reports. Not because I want Twitter to get bombarded with information from my journalists. It's because I want them to get good at it. And so the more they do it, the more natural it becomes. And so when that building explodes or that huge storm comes, they already naturally know how to deliver.

We also have a web-first mentality. And when it becomes web first, they are learning that once it's online, then we can share. And our market has a lot of social when you consider it's pretty small. So, we have these massive—I don't know if you can see in the background—we have massive monitors. They're humongous! And one of them has Charpy on it. And I spend a lot of time.... We don't talk about SEO specifically; although, we do talk about headlines. We do talk about meta tags. But what I really want them to talk about is, once they have a product, they should help share it. And our assignment desk is also the distributor. Our journalists are distributors. And we talk about sharing and links. And this was a really good day. Charpy just changed its format, so I'll have to have a new goal. Our goal is get rid of the orange, because the orange are direct—people who come to the site directly. This was a really good day. It's a really bad story that led to it, but it was a good day. Social driving, sharing, and links, and the relationship that we have with our news consumers sharing along the social world.

So then we thought, hey, let's get really creative. Oprah's going away, so we've got a new show. We could do a new show. So our general manager said, "All right. You know, you've been really good at this whole social blending with on-air and online." We had a fabulous snowstorm that allowed our market to get super bored and have nothing to do but take pictures and share video. And for three days, we had the greatest experience of live sharing of photos and video. We showed that we had a really interactive market ... or so we thought. Hah-hah-hah. So, Oprah goes away. We launch a new show. And it was completely based on social. We interacted live. We

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brought in people where we have a cyber couch using a Google hangout. Every show has a group of people. We broadcast behind the scenes live, and we take people inside the hangout live and in the show. It has garnered incredible international reaction. It garnered incredible national reaction. Our market looked at us like we were crazy.

And that's the reality of social. Social journalism, social and consumers, for us, come to us when they need to, but the rest of the time they consume our product online. To blend social to a very traditional broadcast, we have learned we have to scale it down. So as of Monday, our extraordinarily social show is about to become a calmer social show. It's a lesson that we're learning, and I feel extraordinarily lucky to be in a newsroom and in an environment where I can help test and push limits of journalism in its traditional format, so that everyone else can see it and learn from it. To give a little hope, to inspire change, what we learned is our sales department didn't innovate while our newsroom innovated as far as we could take it. And our sales didn't make the money they wanted with a non-traditional show. It's reality. It's an election year. And I think it's a great lesson to show that no matter how much we are reaching our social communities, we haven't quite found it in our traditional money-making formats. And unless we get really creative and have a little more fear in our sales departments, and for broadcast, there's not a lot of fear yet. There's fear on the news side. It's not fear really.

So, we're going back to something more traditional. I want to give back. I have so many people, especially in the broadcast world, that come to me and say, "Oh, my gosh, what do we do? What do we do?" Well, I have a few things I want to give back. Flexibility. It's really hard to start something big and then be flexible to change it, but we've changed the show since September again and again, and we're going to keep changing it, so we can find a better way to make our money, but continue to be social.

We are passionate about listening to our market and not just sales, and that's a challenge. And for the journalism, the journalist in me, I don't care how much money we make, because I want to listen to my market and be a part of it. And no matter what you do as a journalist, you need to listen. And every market does it—the talking differently on social and in person. I hold meet-ups all the time, so I can just hang out with people in my market just to know them face to face.

I have a lot of people that say, "Jen, thanks for fighting the good fight." This isn't a fight. If I give you anything, this is not a fight. We will show everyone else in the other parts of the buildings in our traditional environments that we are trying hard. We will continue to work hard. We're not fighting for a change. It's going to change. So, as long as we stay positive, it's going to continue to be a positive experience, and anger is never going to help us. So if I can give back, I say, "Let's keep working hard, have fun, and it's never a fight."

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[Applause.]

Question and Answer Session:

Dan Gillmor: I want to go straight to you folks. Jump in.

Man: Thank you very much. In a way, I just wanted to ask the question that you asked at the outset, which is the one that all of you are talking about practices where you become more and more reliant on other people's tools. Well, we have a representative of some of those tools on the panel. So, could you tell us....

Woman: Come closer to the mike.

Man: Sorry. So, all of you were talking about the use of various outside services. We have a representative of one of the outside services. Where you become more reliant on other people's tools; whereas, in the past, news organizations controlled the whole value chain ... at least newspapers did. And I realize that that world is long gone, but could you say a little bit more about how you think strategically about the reliance on outside services and how you deal with that editorially, but also from a business point of view?

Dan Gillmor: LinkedIn wants you to rely on outside services. [laughter]

Chip Cutter: Well, I'd say from our perspective, I mean, we're linking out. We're driving traffic to other publishers, so from us, I mean, it's helping people find content. We've talked about this throughout the contest, but finding content that they might not have seen otherwise. So if you discover a new source or find a new site that you find really interesting, I think that's a great value that LinkedIn brings to you.

Man: I understand why it's valuable for you. I'm curious about the news organizations. [laughter]

Dan Gillmor: Let's hear from the news folks.

Carmen Cano: You know, honestly, when I think about it, I don't think that newspapers ever built the machines that printed the paper, or they never made the paper, or they never built the cars that delivered the paper. So, I think we are using the tools that are out there, and the world has changed, and I don't see any difference.

Dan Gillmor: Was the deliver...? Did the people who printed the publication compete with you for advertising?

Man: Mm-hmm.

Carmen Cano: No. [laughter]

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Borja Echevarria: Well, I in some way disagree a little bit, no? I think newspapers and big organizations, they have the opportunity to build things, because they understand, if they had the attitude, but they understand what they need and what the audience need and what they needed inside the newspapers. But I think they have—how do you—they have....

Carmen Cano: Give up.

Borja Echevarria: They have given up with this story, no? I think there's still an opportunity, no? I can speak a little bit about my experience. As I told you before, we're building our own social network inside El Pais. And it has some things that are good, some things that are not so good, but we have a lot of pressure, for example, from our company for registrations. If we did this through Facebook, that would be impossible. And we are growing very fast, because that social network, at the beginning, it was built like with all the tools of a social network. Then, we used it quite a lot for live blogging. And now, we've connected for comments. So, the tool we are using for the comments in El Pais is that social network. So, our registration people, they are growing very fast. I mean, I don't think we are going to do something very great, but we are experimenting with our own tools. And at the same time, we play with Twitter, we play with Facebook, we do all of that, but we are experimenting and trying to learn.

Jen Lee Reeves: My major feeling is our news consumers go where they want to go, and I want to be everywhere they are.

Dan Gillmor: Next.

Damien Marion: Thank you. Damien Marion from Mexico. I am curious about precisely about the El Pais experience with Scoop, which is as you have told us the social network you've [mentioned]. I would like to know, what's the role this system is playing in your SMO strategy? And maybe if you can, tell us something about your metrics, your results, and pros and cons that you're finding in this kind of system.

Borja Echevarria: OK. I would not say it is a success from the point of view of numbers. I think it was a great success like in, first, doing proselytism inside the newsroom. That was very good for our.... I went to El Pais something like two-years-and-a-half ago. And journalists, they were not even in Twitter, they were not anywhere at El Pais. It was a very traditional newsroom that moved very slowly. I think it was quite behind most other big newsrooms in the world. So, with this social network, they didn't feel so afraid, no? And we use it quite a lot to teach them. And now all of them, they are in Twitter. All of them, they are in Twitter. Now, what is very difficult for us is telling them, "Use Scoop, because from Scoop you can send to Twitter, you can post to Facebook. It's connected to all of them, no?" For example now, one hour ago, we were live blogging a football match between Madrid

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and Barcelona. We were live blogging through our social network, no? And I'll just say Barcelona lost. [laughter]

Dan Gillmor: Oh, I was going to ask who won.

Borja Echevarria: Barcelona lost. Yeah, Barcelona lost. [laughter] I'm sorry about that. So, I mean, I will tell you, it's not a success in one sense, but I feel it is a success from a very important point of view, that it's teaching your newsroom, and this is, for me, it's the key point in this moment.

Dan Gillmor: Be honest now. How many of you were watching the football match? [laughter] OK, a few of you. All right. Question.

Alfred Hermida: I thought it was very interesting when you talked about you sales department not innovating and being too ahead of that. And it sort of touches on what Raju mentioned earlier about these sort of great advertising experiences. So, my question to all of you really is, we've seen that sort of digital innovation and now sort of digital commerce innovation happening through Facebook, through Google, through LinkedIn. Why isn't innovation happening in the sales departments of media companies? And what can we do about it?

Jen Lee Reeves: I know why where I'm at, and it's because they're still making enough money with the traditional product, and that's completely screwing my innovation. [laughter]

Dan Gillmor: And keep in mind that in newspapers, selling used to mean waiting for the phone to ring. That's a hard thing to change.

Borja Echevarria: I think also they are far away of the newsroom. Very far away. You know, I think it was Raju, he was telling [us] he tried to put them together, all the parts of the newsroom. I think the people that sell, I see them once every four months. This is not going to work this way. I need to see them every week. At least every week, I need to sit down with them to explain to them what we are doing. This is very important, and it's not happening.

Dan Gillmor: What's Belo doing?

Carmen Cano: We are in some ways the same. I think that we are right now in a good place and a good transition. There have been some.... I don't think it's just that we are removed. The newsroom has been removed from sales and the other way around. I think that the skills in the newsroom, we have been trying to get better at. It's because it's been necessary. And like you were saying, I don't think that the sales has been so evident. So, we are hiring like social media skills and some of the new trends to try to compensate, but we'll see.

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Dan Gillmor: Next question.

Man: Hi. It's a follow-up question from the first question. How about one of you guys mentioned that you linked your comments section with Facebook, and I can't understand many of the advantages in doing that. Meaning, the conversation actually gets better, you get more points from Facebook, etc. But at the same time, are you not giving up on something that should be part of your content? Meaning, the conversation that's going on around your stories. I mean, what are your thoughts about that? And also, if Dan could give his two cents as well. [laughter]

Carmen Cano: The quality of the commenting that we have been having has been extremely low. There are, you know....

Man: That's the problem most newsrooms, I believe, have.

Carmen Cano: Right. So, I'm not sure of what value you can add if you have a room full of people that are talking always about the same and it's not even relevant to the content where that takes place. There is no context. There is just a full room of fools. That is how it feels, right? The more comments that you have on that tone, the more fools you are going to attract. So, I'm not very interested in having a discussion with fools that I don't know who they are. I am not sure why. You know, we may move away from Facebook. I am always.... I tell my folks, "There are two things that I want to do—make more mistakes and progress not perfection." So, if we figure out that this is not the way to go, we'll pull back and install discuss or create something on our own or who knows, but I really want to know. And so far, it's been just a week. And it was very controversial with marketing, and we are losing control, and we don't have the information about these users. With just one week, the only thing I know is we are getting back more traffic and traction and more conversation from this than we ever got from the other comments before, so more to come. I don't know yet.

Borja Echevarria: Well, I think, as I said before, I think we are giving up too early on this story. We must investigate more. We must try. Our conversation is also quite [a lot], but quality. We have a lot of comments, a lot, but you can't follow them, no? But I think before giving everything to Facebook, I think we must try [to learn] how to improve our comments. It's much easier [to say], "Come on, let's move to Facebook." No? That's easy. We can do it tomorrow or the day afterwards, you know? I think we must do an intellectual effort to try to improve our comments with our own tools, is what I believe. Perhaps in six months, I'll [say], "Let's go to Facebook." But now I think we must evaluate for it.

Jen Lee Reeves: We had pretty dead comments until we blended it with Facebook, and now, it's really, really picked up traffic and engagement to our individual story pages. Bless broadcast website's heart. We're trying to get better and better, especially in my market, especially my newsroom, but the

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comments, once we blended it with Facebook, brought more interaction. Sometimes it shocking what people think is OK to write when they're connected to their Facebook profile, but it was the same case when it was people signing up for your own site. It's just I have more shockingly inappropriate things that are said than before. I'd rather.... But boy, it brings a lot of traffic. [laughs] So, I do believe we shouldn't sell our souls to the products. I think we need to constantly look, relook, and find new ways to communicate and share. Right now, I have little, limited budget or access to coding to recode and to change my site, so if I can get more traffic, and I'm using a tool that people are using today, great, but I'll change it tomorrow if I can find something I can afford.

Man: Could you give it a try, Dan?

Dan Gillmor: I'm the moderator, not...[laughter]. All right. I'll just say what I've said repeatedly in other venues. I think, with great respect to people who do it, I think that the trade is a mistake to trade short-term comfort zone and traffic and the illusion of more civility for, I think, long-term handing a major part of one's business to the biggest competitor that all of you have. They are your biggest competitor. I don't think it's a good idea. Other questions? Wow. How much time do we have? Lots of time. OK.

Until we get another question, let me ask you something about the whole part of social and that it's somewhat related, but we didn't really get into it at all, which is the possibilities of using the social nature of media that we have to go beyond the telling/selling part, but the more direct involvement in the actual journalism through crowdsourcing and other things. I don't know if it's come up earlier here, but I think that's a pretty useful thing we could use this for. I'd like to hear what you all are doing and thinking about that.

Jen Lee Reeves: I put my newsroom into Twitter in 2007, and that was before my news market was in Twitter. But I instantly saw it as a fabulous, extra news scanner. So, we follow trends, we listen, and we look at national trends. We try to look at local trends when they register enough. They're a small market, but it's another thing we need to listen to. And so we ask, we listen, and we use it as another source, and that's always how we've used it.

Borja Echevarria: I think El Pais and most of the journalists, they sell too much, they listen too little. I think this is what is happening, no? And they sell too much [of] only their product. Sometimes when I go and speak to them, [I say], "It's not nice you only sell your stories, the stories of El Pais. You should sell the stories from the Washington Post or from my blog, no?" And I think we are using it too much in that way. But as I said before, one-year-and-a-half ago, they weren't using it at all, so I think it's better than before, but we have to move much more to the other side to listen.

Carmen Cano: Yeah. And how much listening? How much telling? I think that we are more listening than telling. So, I'm happy that we are starting to

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tell more the story. About crowdsourcing, I cannot.... I joined the Dallas Morning News seven months ago. Before that, I was at Hearst for four years, and we had great success crowdsourcing information, mainly in critical times. Like I was in Houston when Hurricane Ike came, and the information that we had on people that had disappeared from Galveston, and where [was] the power and the gas, and it was the better source of information, and it was all brought [by] two people that volunteered that information to us.

Dan Gillmor: Your example from the accounting magazine was a really good one of that feedback loop that seems to work. What are you doing at LinkedIn to get more of that kind of stuff going?

Chip Cutter: Yeah. So, we have a really good relationship with a lot of publishers. Publishers are constantly pitching us stories or sending us stories that they think would work well on LinkedIn Today, so we've got that relationship there. And we're also.... I mean, it's more a matter of kind of helping them see what groups, for instance, might be good to use on LinkedIn or kind of how you could use the network. Just giving them examples, I think, is one of the biggest ways that we can help in all this. And so, we're certainly seeing the accounting example as a good one. Publications like Harvard Business Review and others, though, are using their groups and their brands on there to preview their content, to say, "Here's what's coming up. What would you like to see out of our Careers Issue, for instance, or what would you like to see in what's coming next?" So, I think there's multiple ways to do that, but I think kind of from our end just showing them the examples, giving them that is a big help.

Dan Gillmor: How many news organizations have started groups on LinkedIn, which is part of your service that almost no one knows about, which is also pretty interesting?

Chip Cutter: I mean, I don't have the exact. I can give you the exact number, but I think Harvard Business Review is by far the standout example. They've got 185,000 members as part of their group at this point, and they've got three community managers to go in there to help moderate and to ask questions. And it's been a really good way to drive traffic to their site, but also just to get people thinking about their content and talking about it in different ways.

Dan Gillmor: It would stand to reason that the business-oriented social network would have HBR and things like that. We have a question here.

Dave Grimm: Hi. My name is Dave Grimm. I'm the Online News Editor of Science Magazine. And when I attended something like this, it wasn't this event, but it was another Knight workshop a few years ago, and that was when Twitter was first starting to take off, and I went back and I told our news staff, I'm like, you know, "We've got to get into Twitter. We've got to get into Facebook." And the reaction I got, especially since we have a lot of

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older reporters on our staff, was, you know, "I don't have time. We don't have the resources. I'm spending so much time.... First, I was writing for print. Now you want me to write for online. Now you want me to blog. Now you want me to tweet. Now you want me to post to Facebook." And you guys are talking about all these great strategies for even getting reporters to engage more with their audience and more with community. And I can just see myself going back to the news department now and trying to make that sell. I have two questions. One, what's the best way to convince reporters that in the minus-five hours of free time they have in their day that they should also be doing all these other things to get eyes on their stories? Sorry to ask the million-dollar question or the billion-dollar question here, but how do I tell our business department that's a useful use of our reporters' time to do this? What's the end goal? What's the monetization of getting more reader engagement, more traffic on the site?

Jen Lee Reeves: For your business department, find your competition and show them how they're already kicking your butt. [laughter] For telling your peers that they should do it, you can't make them. Social is real. And so if you can, find someone who can explain how they've had a good personal experience or challenge each person. I've worked with newsrooms where, you know, there was like an award for beer to show that you had a conversation on Twitter. Beer for Twitter conversations? Sweet! I mean, just getting an opportunity to just learn by playing. I mean, I teach play. To learn social, you've got to play. And so, I really started in social personally because I'm a mom, and so back in '07, there was nothing but moms to talk to, so it was great, and then I learned how to do it for journalism. My husband got into it because he loves sports. Now he's a total geek like me.

Dan Gillmor: Speaking of beer for conversation, where do we go after the day is over? [laughter/applause] OK. Thank you very much to our panel.

[Applause.]