

1. Week 8 : Online Media

COM546 - 22 November 2005

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2. Outline

1. Evolution of Online News : Stanley Farrar, Seattle Times
 2. Overview of Assignments
 3. Food!
 4. Discussion of This Week's Readings
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3. But First ...

- o Stage Setting: EPIC 2015
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4. Premise

- o Those who use blogging and RSS technologies can be key players in participatory journalism and modern politics.
 - o The resulting disintermediation has potentially wide-ranging impact on traditional media - from business model and structure to scope and delivery:
 - French think tank: "printed daily newspapers will disappear", editorsWeblog - 23 June 2005
 - We Media : How audiences are shaping the future of news and information, American Press Institute, September 2003 (English and Espagnol)
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5. Stanley Farrar

- o Managing Editor, Seattle Times (formerly, assistant managing editor for graphics)
 - Media Experts Ponder Declining Credibility, WSU, April 2005
 - Sizing Up a New Audience, National Conference of Editorial Writers Winter 2000
-

6. Assignments & Food

- o Papers - Friday!
- o Review presentation schedule - swap if you don't like your assignment!
- o Food break (lecture, small group discussions when we return)

7. Blog Characteristics

- Reverse chronological journaling (format)
- Regular, date-stamped entries (timeliness)
- Links to related news articles, documents, blog entries within each entry (attribution)
- Archived entries (old content accessible)
- Links to related blogs (blogrolling)
- RSS or XML feed (ease of syndication)
- Passion (voice)

8. Blogs : Part of Web 2.0

- Web 2.0 : web technology as a platform - content as data - meta-data (tagging) for community (flickr, del.icio.us)
- "[C]ontent will be more important than its container in this next phase [of the Web]... search, RSS and video-capture software such as TiVo... have begun to unlock content from any vessel we try to put it in." - *Tom Curley*, Associated Press CEO, November 2004
- "In the era of Internet television, it will be as simple and cost-effective to create a microchannel as it is to create a Web site."
Jeremy Allaire, Brightcove (creator of Dreamweaver and Cold Fusion), October 2005
- Most content will be first encountered away from the domain in which it originated: eg, RSS feeds (for blogs, online news, other web sites), "TV" on the iPod (one step "beyond" Tivo/Replay)

9. Blogs v. Mass Media

- Mass Media
 - Capital and labor-intensive
 - Geographically distinct
 - Services like AFP, Reuters, AP provide content ... but it has historically been packaged in a "local" medium (newspaper, radio, TV)
- Blogging (includes video blogs, podcasts)
 - Not capital-intensive
 - Influence rests on the Internet distributed network that removes the geographic barrier (space)
 - The Internet also removes barrier of time (asynchronous communication)

10. What is Journalism?

Journalism is "our day book, our collective diary, which records our common life. That which goes unrecorded goes unpreserved ... The creation and preservation of collective memory..." is the practice of journalism.

- James W. Carey

By this definition, "blogging" is a form of journalism.

11. Participatory Journalism

- Facilitated by social software (eg, blogs, RSS, wikis) and propagated via social networks
- Characterized by expanded two-way communication between media and readers (shorthand/buzzword : conversation)
 - With blogging, reader becomes author and author (journalist) becomes reader, ending the one-to-many model of communication.
- Examples:
 - OhMyNews ([Korean](#), [English](#))
 - [Bayosphere](#) (San Francisco, Dan Gillmor)
 - [NowPublic](#), [kuro5hin](#), [slashdot](#)
 - CBC Radio 3 (Vancouver, BC) and LA Times Wikitorial (tried and busted)

12. Blogging Examples : Media, Politics

- Media Pundits: [Buzz Marchine](#) by Jeff Jarvis, [Cyberjournalist](#), [Dan Gillmor](#), [CJR Daily](#)
- Political Technologists: [Doc Searls](#) and [David Winer](#) (political technologists)
- Political Bloggers/Communities: [InstaPundit.com](#), [Political Animal](#) ... [Daily Kos](#), [Red State](#)
- Media Blogs: [ABC Podcasts](#), [CBS Public Eye](#), [NBC Brian Williams](#)

13. Shaping the News Hole

- [Trent Lott](#) (2002)
Covered by only one reporter following event; kept alive by bloggers - liberal and conservative
- [Microsoft "switch" campaign](#) (2002)
- [LA Times: Supreme Justices Scalia v Ginsburg](#)(2004)
- [Dan Rather](#) (2004)
- CNN Chief News Executive [Eason Jordan](#) (2005)
- [Jeff Gannon](#) (2005)
- **How does the web of blogging work? In a word: RSS.**

14. What is RSS?

- Rich Site Summary, Really Simple Syndication, RDF Site Summary

Literal "Name" Not Important!



- XML document that facilitates content syndication
 - This "feed" contains structured data
 - Transformed to information by RSS reader
 - Looks horrible to the uninitiated! ([screenshot](#))

- Keys to adoption: ease of syndication, low cost
 - Syndication technology "built into" blogging tools, Radio Userland, Blogger, Movable Type, etc

15. Technology Adoption

- Blogging, RSS and the Information Landscape: A Look At Online News - WWW2005 ([ppt](#), [paper](#))
 - Rogers: an innovation is "an idea practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption"
 - Winston: adoption rate slows with competing, incompatible prototypes and absence of a supervening social necessity
- Diffusion variables: relative advantage, compatability, ease of use, trialability, observability
- Adoption variables: hear about the innovation (awareness), persuaded to try, then adopt-or-reject

16. Awareness (RSS, Media)

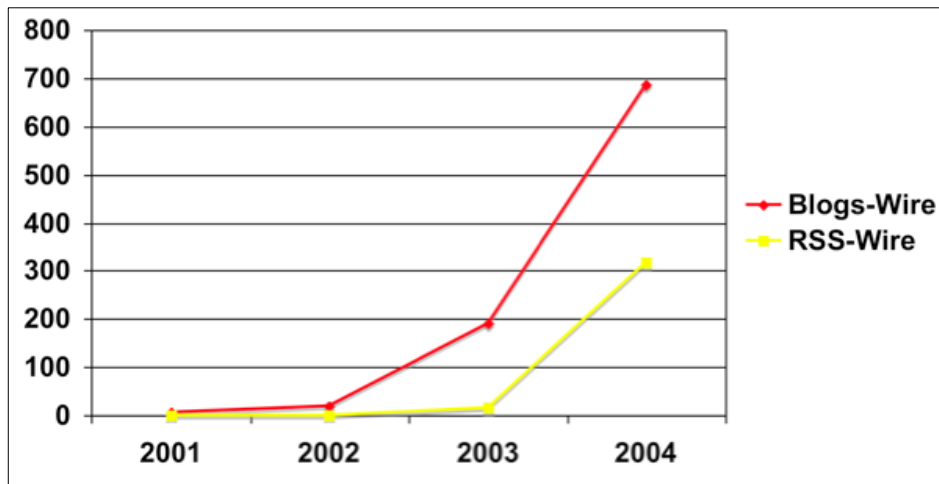
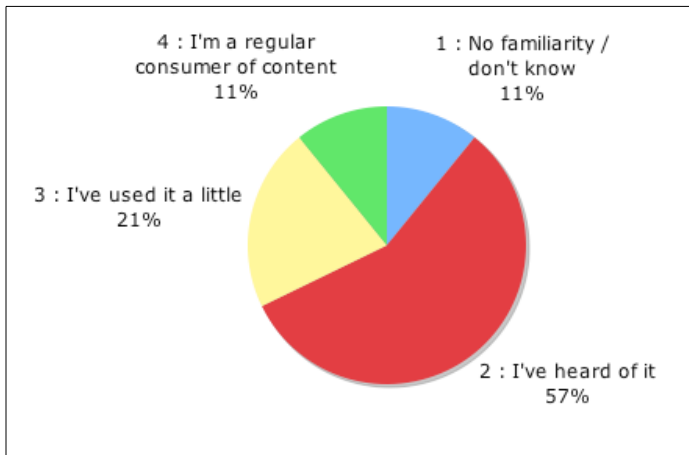


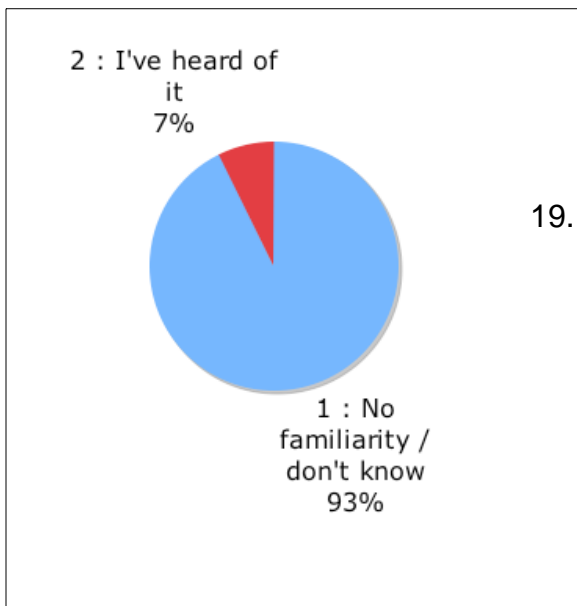
Chart 1: Frequency of Appearance of Blogs and RSS in Lexis-Nexis News Wire Reports, 2001-2004.

17. Awareness (Students 1/2)



COM 300 - Spring 2005
 Juniors and Seniors (n=28)
 Blogs

18. Awareness (Students, 2/2)



COM 300 - Spring 2005
 Juniors and Seniors (n=28)
 Flickr

19. Awareness (General Public)

- Pew Internet and American Life Project:
 - Spring 2002: 3% had created blog
 - March 2003: 11% had read blogs
 - Fall 2004: 8% had created blog
 - End of 2004: 27% of 120 M US adults had read blogs ... 5% had used an RSS reader

20. What's In a Name?

- Newspaper (product) is printed (action) on newsprint (technology)
- Blog (product) is blogged (action) with blogging software (technology)
 - No clear differentiation
 - Also the case with RSS
- Hinders communication ... slows adoption > smaller social system

21. Blogging & RSS Social System

- Jan 2003: ~ 500,000 blogs
- March 2005: 8 million - 24 million blogs
- RSS Feeds - Technorati, Blogpulse, Blogdex, Feedster, Blogstreet ...
 - Today: Technorati is tracking 21.5 million blogs and 1.7 billion links.

Signed in as kathy [Site Feedback](#) [Account](#) [Your Watchlist](#) [Profile](#) [Sign Out](#)

Technorati™ [Search](#) [Tags](#) [Popular](#) [About](#) [Help](#)

[Options](#)

Sponsored Links

Blogging Tips & News
Learn how to effectively use blogs, wikis, RSS, podcasts and more
www.newcommblogzine.com

Scott's Blog
Now a very popular weblog!
Read what thousands have discovered.

Search the Live Web
Currently tracking 12.5 million sites and 1.2 billion links.

Technorati lets you search sites that update with extreme frequency, like blogs and news. Unlike other engines, our results are individual posts (portions of pages), so they're more specific. Search results are listed newest to oldest, and are often only minutes old!

You can search by **Keyword**, **Website URL**, or **Tag**.

22. Why Use RSS? (1/2)

AKA "persuasion" step in adoption

- For developers: a function of stable specification
- For customers: a necessity because prior practice became cumbersome. AND tools and feeds became easier to find and use:
 - A necessary condition for adoption (Rogers)
 - Yahoo! News: "We're trying to make this understandable for normal people."

23. Why Rapid Adoption?

- Syndication in line with culture
- Business model is evolving
How to reverse loss in readers? How to generate online revenue?
- Recognition of growth of blogosphere, driving readers
Concern: "pay to read" barriers (Wall Street Journal v Christian Science Monitor)

24. Adoption Hurdles Remain

- Incompatible RSS formats > burden on developers
 - Still fighting about formats (Atom)
- Non-integrated software > potential consumers must find and install new software
 - IT departments : no software installation
 - Everyday computer users are uneasy downloading, installing
- Subscribing remains a technological hurdle
 - Accidentally clicking on an XML feed is disconcerting

- Auto-discovery should help, as will systems (links to readable content) like About.com's and the BBC

25. The Big Question: Business Model

- Who pays for content? And how?
- Newspapers: subscription models have, in the main, been a bust.
 - use RSS to entice readers to main site, "eyeballs" for advertisers (this is natural evolution of existing advertising models)
 - Next step ... embed ads in the RSS feeds
- Blogosphere: [Google AdSense](#), [Amazon Associates](#) (referral links - see [blogcritics](#)), [CafePress](#), [PayPal Tip Jars](#)
- Hire a Blogger [The Rise of the professional blogger](#)
- Monetize community content? : [wikipedia](#)

○ My Crystal Ball

- Technology transformation: gone are barriers of time and space (Friedman's *The World is Flat*)
- More "blended" news (call it a multi-media company?)
 - Branded ventures, citizen videographers -- [Nashville is Talking](#), a project of WKRN
 - Multiple-sourced and authored material: [Now Public](#)
 - Podcasting (DIY radio - not a year old)
[NYT](#), [Podcasting News](#), [Pew Internet](#)
- The question remains: who will fund this mediascape?

○ Prepare for Small Group Discussion

- Groups 1 - 2 - 4 : review class blog posts:
- Groups 3 - 5 : agree upon key points
- Regroup: knowledge share -- then discussion

○ Additional Resources

- PR, Marketing, New Media
 - [New Media Musings](#)
 - [PR Thoughts](#)
 - [Steve Rubel - MicroPersuasion](#)
- Technology Tips and News
 - [47 tips from the best bloggers](#) (NetGuide.nz)
 - [Doc Searls](#)
 - [Evolution of RSS](#) (WebReference.com)
 - [John Battell](#)
 - [Slashdot](#)

- Social Software, Social Networks
 - [Cluetrain Manifesto](#)
 - [OurMedia](#)
 - [Wikipedia](#)
- My blogs
 - [WiredPen](#)
 - [US Politics](#)
 - [SeattleBlogs.us](#)

○ **Merci!**

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