Live Blogging: Media Convergence Matured?

University of Gothenburg, Sweden, 24 January 2014

Dr Neil Thurman
A “dangerous” word?

- Technological convergence – “fusion” of video, telecoms, computing
- Convergence of industrial structures and ownership and control
- Convergence of patterns of use (consumers)
- Cultural and textual convergence.

Cultural and textual convergence.

“both fact and fantasy lose their distinctiveness, and previously discrete categories of media content and function blend in an electronic hybridity”

- Infotainment
- Docu-dramas
- The live and pre-recorded
A dangerous word?

- “Structured inequalities … created & sustained” by e-media
- “progressive erosion of principles of … universal access”

- Sees the use of media and information technologies by “individual, non-business” users as “situated …[in] home, family and household”.

“this ‘democratization’ of media use signals a broadening of opportunities for individuals and grassroots communities to tell stories.. to present arguments.. to share information”

Jenkins and Deuze, 2008

Jenkins, Henry and Deuze, Mark (2008) “Editorial: Convergence Culture” Convergence (14) 1
the emergence … an integrated media system has been slow, a result, some argue, of institutional inertia and technical obstacles

“the future of media and information technology … is neither certain nor predictable” - Silverstone, 1995
“In a longitudinal study of 83 online news sites in the US, Greer and Mensing (2006) found a slight increase in interactive features from 1997 to 2003”

“Dimitrova and Neznanski’s (2006) study of the coverage of the Iraq war in 2003 in 17 online newspapers from the US and elsewhere showed no increase in the use of video and audio in the US newspapers compared to Schultz’s study published seven years earlier.”

Figure 1. Total number of multimedia packages published on nytimes.com 2000–2008, based on results from the multimedia search option on nytimes.com.
• New forms of long-form online narrative journalism
• Live Blogs
The snow burst through the trees with no warning but a last-second whoosh of sound, a two-story wall of white and Chris Rudolph’s piercing cry: “Avalanche! Elyset”
Snowfall: Ambitions

• to make a “Single story out of all the assets”
• “Weave things together” so “Text, video, photography &
graphics could all be consumed in a way that was similar to
reading—a different kind of reading” “wanted [visual] to feel
like a natural continuation [of text].”...
• ... so “readers would ... feel that they were reading into the
graphic, and not seeing it as a distraction”

Source: Duenes et al (2013)
New forms of long-form online narrative journalism

MY YEAR WITH MALALA

In January, Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani schoolgirl shot by the Taliban, asked Christina Lamb to write her book. From theatre trips to a visit from Angelina Jolie, this is the story of their remarkable time together.
New forms of long-form online narrative journalism

The Guardian

ENGLAND V AUSTRALIA

It is amongst the longest, hardest and most engrossing battles in the world, spanning numerous sporting disciplines and defined by countless contests.
New forms of long-form online narrative journalism

NSA FILES: DECODED

What the revelations mean for you.
New forms of long-form online narrative journalism
US-Israeli missile tests raise tensions over Syria

Israel has confirmed that it carried out a joint missile test with the US in the Mediterranean.

592 comments

LATEST

Syrian online activist The 47th says the Sky News report is correct and a press conference on the defence is planned for 5pm local time (3pm BST) in... Syria crisis - live updates

Pics: Unhappy at Labour MPs cheering for Obama

Syria refugee talks in the US

McCain: rejection of strikes would be catastrophic

The US only used 241 of the 500 US bombs...

Miliband: scrap lobbying bill

Labour leader says charities and trade unions could find themselves in legal trouble over democratic advocacy.

142 comments

Live blog - calls to delay lobbying bill

The lobbying bill is 'over reach of lobbying bill

The lodge is 'over reach of lobbying bill

Microsoft buys Nokia handset unit

Deal worth $7.2bn delivers Europe's last big handset maker into US ownership and moves Microsoft firmly into device manufacturing.
Sportsday - transfer reaction LIVE

Reaction to a record-breaking transfer deadline day, including high-profile moves for Mesut Ozil and Marouane Fellaini.
Time spent on 4 news formats, coverage of Royal Wedding, Guardian.co.uk, April 2011
Time spent on 4 news formats, coverage of protest march, Guardian.co.uk, March 2011
Engagement per visitor / visit duration (mins)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Unique Visitor Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boston Marathon Bombings (n=6)</td>
<td>Total = 49 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13 Egypt protests (n=3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth of Prince George (n=6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wimbledon 2013 (n=4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Field work January 2013

Online survey. Excluded respondents who’d not accessed news in previous month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>2078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>1016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>1024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>2170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil*</td>
<td>1003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>1004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q11: Thinking of the way you looked at news online in the last week, which of the following ways of consuming news did you use?

Base: All markets UK (n=2078) US (n=2028) Spain (n=979) Japan (n=978) Italy (n=965) Germany (n=1062) France (n=973) Denmark (n=1007) Urban Brazil (n=985)
Live Blogging – significance

• “the pivotal platform for newsrooms”
  — Prof Charlie Beckett (2010)

• “transforming journalism”
  — Paul Gallagher (2011), head of online content at the Manchester Evening News.
Live Blogging – recent examples

Glasgow helicopter crash- [bbc.in/18a4p8v](http://bbc.in/18a4p8v)

UK energy pricing - [bit.ly/18a3LYO](http://bit.ly/18a3LYO)

NSA files - latest - [bit.ly/1c6sR8M](http://bit.ly/1c6sR8M)
Live Blogging – key characteristics

Direct relaying of commentary and analysis as events unfold

9.25am: Standard & Poor's has said it won't downgrade South Korea's credit rating following the death of Kim Jong-il.

"Our ratings on South Korea take into account temporary uncertainties associated with North Korean security risks as well contingent liabilities arising from a possible reunification of the North and South. But it warned that South Korea's rating or outlook could be revised if the succession plan was not smoothly implemented or if there were other

Date-stamped updates
### Live Blogging – key characteristics

**Reverse Chronological order with latest update at top**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 10:17 BST | The OECD has is predicting that the UK economy will shrink by 0.7% this year, **according to Sky**. Here's an extract from its story.  
  The Paris-based organisation reduced its 2012 growth forecast for Britain by more than an entire percentage point, cutting it from the 0.5% growth it predicted in May to -0.7% - a major contraction. |
| 10:14 BST | There will be an urgent question on planning in the Commons at 11.30am, **according to Paul Waugh**. |
| 10:11 BST | The Press Association has just snapped this.  
  Home secretary Theresa May will announce her decision on whether computer hacker Gary McKinnon can be extradited to the United States by October 16, his lawyer Karen Todner said today. |
| 10:00 BST | And here are the main points from the Nick Clegg interviews. I've taken the quotes from **PoliticsHome**.  
  - Clegg said that the current planning laws needed to be changed because they were “frankly useless”.  
  - At the moment, if you’re a house builder and you’re got planning permission to build X number of houses on a site, if after five years, you’ve been unable to build homes on... |
Live Blogging – key characteristics

Often contain multimedia elements and make generous use of links
This is a copy of the official Veterans Day Proclamation from 1954:
Here's a bit of background about Veterans Day, via the Department of Veterans Affairs: World War I – known at the time as “The Great War” - officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, in the Palace of Versailles outside the town of Versailles, France. However, fighting ceased seven months earlier when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of “the war to end all wars.”

by Margarita Noriega (Reuters) November 11 at 4:08 PM

Farm helps traumatized veterans re-enter civilian life [Al Jazeera America]

by Amy Tennery (Reuters) November 11 at 4:06 PM
Iran Elections: Iranians Vote for the Islamic Republic’s Next President

Friday's presidential election in Iran is unlikely to bring significant change to the Islamic republic, whose supreme leader has ensured hard-line candidates dominate the field. But the sole moderate could upset the race. Reuters World brings you live coverage of the elections, including in-depth reporting, analysis, photography, interactive graphics, video and more for this event.

READER COMMENT: I've been at odds with whether to VOTE or not. And I did eventually at 10:45pm. There are still people queued in order to vote. Honestly I couldn't believe it! I feel relieved right now. I think it was worth another shot.

by MiAd Frqn edited by Margarita Noriega (Reuters) June 14 at 7:52 PM
Live Blogging – what it’s not

- Not a narrative constructed after the event
- Doesn’t use conventional inverted pyramid structure
Live Blogging – what it’s not

• Not truly analogous with rolling TV news coverage because:
  • Less reliance on visual and aural channels
  • Live Blogs allow longer gaps between updates when there is lull in story (1/2 hour) – not acceptable on tv!
Time spent on 4 news formats, coverage of Royal Wedding, Guardian.co.uk, April 2011

- Live Blog: 600,000 mins.
- Picture Gallery 1: 200,000 mins.
- Article: 100,000 mins.
- Picture Gallery 2: 50,000 mins.


Where were you when you looked at/listened to the news over the last few days?

- **At home: communal space** 71%
- **At home: personal space** 41%
- **At work** 31%
- **Whilst commuting in car or other personal transport** 28%
- **Whilst travelling, commuting on public transport** 9%
- **While out and about generally** 6%
- **At a place of study** 6%
- **Other people’s homes** 5%
- **Another place** 1%
- **I didn’t consume news during the last couple of days** 0%

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UK3A. Where were you when you looked at/listened to the news over the last few days?

*Base: Denmark=994*
Aggregated hourly page view data for 10 Live Blogs at Guardian.co.uk, March-May 2011.

Peak caused by Live Blogging of the death of Osama Bin Laden

Office Hours
‘News at Work’ consumption patterns...

- Methodical & comprehensive 1st visit to new sites followed by...
- Several subsequent visits motivated by “need for a distraction or more info about an event”

Source: Boczkowski, 2010
‘News at Work’ consumption patterns....

- Habit of monitoring news sites homepages and often not “clicking on stories” during subsequent visits.
- Preference for textual rather than aural, animated or highly visual content (“privacy concerns” in office location).

Source: Boczkowski, 2010
Regular updates (av. every 9 mins) provide follow up information about events.

“I like the immediacy... being kept up-to-date”

“I like simple bite-sized nuggets of information on updates”

“I like that it is updated when a new item on the story breaks”

—Survey respondents, pers. comm, Aug ‘11
How Live Blogging suits ‘News at Work’ consumption

Use of a single–dynamic–page, suits users’ preference for monitoring a page rather than clicking on stories

“I like that it gives you many different little points about the story”

—Survey respondent, pers. comm, Aug ‘11

29 users in our survey ‘liked’ the ‘convenience’ of Live Blogs.
How Live Blogging suits ‘News at Work’ consumption

Text format more suitable for reading in office where workers need to look as though they are working

“Something I can glance at if I’m busy”

“Perfect way to keep up to date during the working day”

“Easier to read while getting on with other things (e.g. at work!)”

—Survey respondents, pers. comm, Aug ‘11
LIVE news pages are more balanced than article pages because they give a range of opinions and routinely link out to sources and supporting documents.

LIVE news pages can be difficult to understand because the story is broken into short updates.

LIVE news pages are a convenient way of following news while I am at work.

I worry about the accuracy of the information on LIVE news pages.

January 2013
‘News at Work’ consumption & news content

‘News at work’ consumers prefer “non public-affairs stories – in particular sports, crime and celebrity”

“better fodder for conversations with co-workers than public affairs news”.

—Boczkowski, 2010: 153

- Non-sporting events like the Oscars or X Factor: 13% (US) vs. 12% (UK)
- Unfolding political stories like an election or budget: 75% (US) vs. 58% (UK)
- Breaking news stories like natural disasters: 80% (US) vs. 74% (UK)
- Sports events like the Olympic Games: 33% (US) vs. 54% (UK)

- Non-sporting events like the Oscars or X Factor: 13% US, 12% UK
- Unfolding political stories like an election or budget: 75% US, 58% UK
- Breaking news stories like natural disasters: 80% US, 74% UK
- Sports events like the Olympic Games: 33% US, 54% UK
“It is sometimes a bit of a shock to be reminded that, in operational and practical fact, the medium is the message”

• Risks
  • Little time for factual verification
  • Trivialise news
  • Confuse readers
  • No time for the basics

• Opportunities
  • Rebuilt trust
  • Increase participation
“looser culture of corroboration”

Corroborate --

vb1. (tr) to confirm or support (facts, opinions, etc), esp by providing fresh evidence: the witness corroborated the accused's statement
7.01pm: There are reports on Twitter that the sports clothing store Lillywhites is now on fire.

Lillywhites on fire piccadilly circus
http://yfrog.com/gzrtqbej
less than a minute ago via Twitter for BlackBerry®

Chris Snell
chrissnelltweet

7.56pm: Matt Taylor has said the post at 7.01 reporting a fire at Lillywhites should be corrected. The smoke that can be seen in the picture is from the fire on Jermyn Street reported by Paul Lewis at 6:59. Firefighters put the blaze out shortly afterwards.
PHOTO: Despite Sandy, Soldiers Stand Guard At Tomb Of The Unknown Soldier

By RICKI PERALTA

October 30, 2012 12:46 AM

Despite the 11:16 a.m. EST. 11:16 a.m. EST. National Guard

The Guard reported on Twitter that the flag is flying at half-staff over the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, which served as a memorial for service members who lost their lives in the war.

Soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Regiment, also known as the "Old Guard," stand guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, despite the inclement weather conditions surrounding Hurricane Sandy.


Our Original Video continues.

This is perhaps one of the most iconic photos of the night.

According to the National Guard, approximately 5,000 people visit the Tomb each day, but they are currently unable to do so because of the hurricane.

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is located in Section 3, row 3, grave 3002, at the National Cemetery of the United States of America, 10000 Washington Blvd, Arlington, Va.

Follow @RickiPeralta on Twitter.
Benulek
02 June 2010 1:16pm

This is a fast developing story and the details are sketchy at this stage, so if you are in the area and have news please post a comment below or email at matthew.weaver@guardian.co.uk

This is deeply irresponsible. If you have concrete information, contact the police. If you have rumours, keep them to yourself.

Elphaba
02 June 2010 1:19pm

This comment was removed by a moderator because it didn't abide by our community standards. Replies may also be deleted. For more detail see our FAQs.

drbendyspooce
02 June 2010 1:19pm

I think having a comment section on this is pretty ghoulish and in bad-taste. It's only going to be strewn with conjecture and potential libel. Best just to let the truth come out properly instead of this rolling, almost certainly erroneous way of doing things.

Fwoggie
02 June 2010 1:22pm

I hope Alan Hannah doesn't get done later for jumping a red light :/ You never know though, I've read about crazier things than that.

FifthCookieMonster
02 June 2010 1:23pm

One notch further down in the degeneration of the Guardian.
Usability

Reuters Institute Digital News Survey 2013, UK sample.

- LIVE news pages are more balanced than article pages because they give a range of opinions and routinely link out to sources and supporting documents.
- LIVE news pages can be difficult to understand because the story is broken into short updates.
- LIVE news pages are a convenient way of following news while I am at work.
- I worry about the accuracy of the information on LIVE news pages.
Live blogs – threat to ‘universal access’

• Live blogs – resource intensive – 15 ‘person hours’ each

“There is still a need for self-contained, structured reporting and analysis, and for narrative storytelling, but its relationship with the live stream is still developing. We are still working to understand how they can best complement one another and how the two can be blended together when appropriate. And, for newsrooms, what the implications are of trying to do both”

• Risks
  • Little time for factual verification
  • Trivialise news
  • Confuse readers
  • No time for the basics

• Opportunities
  • Rebuilt trust
  • Increase participation
Usability, balance, accuracy, convenience: UK readers’ attitudes

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- LIVE news pages are a convenient way of following news while I am at work.
- I worry about the accuracy of the information on LIVE news pages.
Live Blogs – trust and objectivity

“less opinion based and more factual...I feel more empowered to make up my own mind”

“the person writing it is less likely to have an angle”

“I trust it more than some articles...most of it’s not opinion, it’s more fact based.”

“I’m more engaged in news than I have been for years. For me it’s about being able to make up my own mind.”

—user survey and interviews, pers. comm, Aug ‘11
Objectivity = verification + transparency + supporting evidence + balance
Aggregation and links

- **16.25** hyperlinks per live blog at *The Guardian* (Thurman and Walters, 2013: 91)
- Live blogs = **one third substantive quotes** (ibid)
- Median number of links in regular news articles - **2.6** (Stray, 2010).

**Best practice:**
- Attribute transparently (block quotes etc)
- Link to source material directly.

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The OECD has is predicting that the UK economy will shrink by 0.7% year, according to Sky. Here's an extract from its story.

*The Paris-based organisation reduced its 2012 growth forecast for Britain by more than an entire percentage point, cutting it from the 0.5% growth it predicted in May to -0.7% - a major contraction.*
Making corrections

- Acknowledge within the live blog as quickly as possible.
- AND go back to the original post.

**Correction**: We now understand it was not Watson. Apologies.

In response to another question about whether BSkyB came up in his conversations with Brooks, Cameron says the point he is trying to make is that he was not involved in BSkyB decisions. He did not even know when announcements were going to be made.

**12.42pm**: Penny Mordaunt, a Conservative, says the aid agencies are saying that donations to famine relief in east Africa are down because the phone hacking scandal is taking up too much media attention.

Cameron says that is why he wanted to press ahead with his visit to Africa.
—user survey and interviews, pers. comm, Aug '11
“this ‘democratization’ of media use signals a broadening of opportunities for individuals and grassroots communities to tell stories.. to present arguments.. to share information”

Jenkins and Deuze, 2008

Jenkins, Henry and Deuze, Mark (2008) “Editorial: Convergence Culture” Convergence (14) 1
Insert screenshot of a users’ live blog using scriblive platform
Reader Participation

Likelihood of users to participate in news formats at Guardian.co.uk

Source: Thurman and Walters (2012), n=189
“structured inequalities … created and sustained by electronic media” – Silverstone, 1995

% user-generated content

Guardian live blogs: Guardian.co.uk (Thurman & Walters, 2012)

Newspapers & TV news websites:
- Virginia Tech (Wigley and Fontenot, 2009)
- Tucson, Arizona shootings (Wigley and Fontenot, 2011)
Eurozone crisis live: Italy faces 'billions of euros of losses' on derivative contracts

Italy risks losing around €8bn over debt deals made as it tried to improve its finances before joining the euro, the Financial Times reports.

- Details
- Early reaction
- German confidence hits six-year high
- Commodities pioneer Marc Rich dies

Graeme Wearden
guardian.co.uk, Wednesday 25 June 2013 10.44 BST
Jump to comments (120)

Open for comments. Sign in or create your Guardian account to join the discussion.

119 comments. Showing conversations, threads collapsed, sorted oldest first

Antiehypocrite
26 June 2013 8.23am
Let me guess..... Goldman Sachs was advising

Kizbot > Antiehypocrite
26 June 2013 8.30am
@Antiehypocrite 26 June 2013 8.23am. Get clipFix for Firefox.

Lol... boat mo to it.

Gelion > Antiehypocrite
26 June 2013 8.31am
It's only €8 billion.

The UK lost about £750 / €900 billion to the bankers since 2008 in QE, unemployement and loss of taxes, loss of SME loans, the devaluation of sterling, directly propping up the banker balance sheets (at least that money might come back).

Scaff1 > Gelion
26 June 2013 8.38am
“If you get any more than a hundred comments it becomes impossible to write the live blog and read the comments”

- Matt Wells, personal communication, June 17, 2011

“[live blogging sports events] is quite a busy process and it would be difficult to keep an eye on Twitter”

- Rob Smyth, personal communication, July 6, 2011.
Iran Elections: Iranians Vote for the Islamic Republic’s Next President

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by MiAd Frq in edited by Margarita Noriega (Reuters) June 14 at 7:52 PM
Official sources

Non-official sources

Non-technology-mediated source interaction

Technology-mediated source interaction

ScribbleLIVE

The Guardian