Live, Long-form Online News: 
*Design, Production, Consumption*

Medium Design Seminar, London, 5 December, 2013

Dr Neil Thurman
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 4th 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

502 comments

Ed Miliband and hardline for Syria strike

McCain: rejection of strikes would be catastrophic in... US unlikely to attack former US bombs

142 comments

Live blog - calls to delay lobbying bill

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

502 comments

Miliband: scrap lobbying bill

The lobby is the dark side of the lobby

United land Fellaini after day of farce

United land Fellaini after day of farce

Ozil seals £42.5m Arsenal move

Football: Arsène Wenger has signed Mesut Özil and the Italian goalkeeper Emiliano Viviano on loan.

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Andrew Brown: Pope Francis and the Vatican’s ‘crows and vipers’

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Food preferences: Taste geography

The Kalahari Desert’s dark side

Microsoft buys Nokia handset unit

Deal worth £8.6bn delivers Europe’s last big handset maker into US ownership and moves Microsoft firmly into device manufacturing.

Microsoft and Nokia’s problems - in three graphs

LIVE Business live - Microsoft-Nokia deal

The rise and fall of a mobile phone giant

Twitter reaction to mobile deal
Sportsday - transfer reaction LIVE

Reaction to a record-breaking transfer deadline day, including high-profile moves for Mesut Ozil and Marouane Fellaini.

Scores, Results & Fixtures

Tennis: US Open
Scores | Men’s draw | Women’s | Order of play

Football
Arsenal complete £42.4m Ozil signing
Everton complete triple

Horse Racing
UK & Ire results | Calendars | BBC Tweets

The University for business and the professions
Time spent on 4 news formats, coverage of Royal Wedding, Guardian.co.uk, April 2011

Minimum aggregated mins. on page over 24 hours

Live Blog | Picture Gallery 1 | Article | Picture Gallery 2
---|---|---|---
700,000 | 200,000 | 200,000 | 100,000
Time spent on 4 news formats, coverage of protest march, Guardian.co.uk, March 2011

- Live Blog 1: 450,000 minutes
- Live Blog 2: 150,000 minutes
- Op-ed: 100,000 minutes
- Article: 50,000 minutes
- Picture Gallery: 50,000 minutes

The University for business and the professions
Engagement per visitor / visit duration (mins)

- Boston Marathon Bombings (n=6)
- 2012-13 Egypt protests (n=3)
- Birth of Prince George (n=6)
- Wimbledon 2013 (n=4)

Total unique visitor numbers=49 million
Online survey. Excluded respondents who’d not accessed news in previous month

Field work January 2013

<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
UK energy pricing - bit.ly/18a3LYO
NSA files - latest - bit.ly/1c6sR8M

Today:
Storm warning - bbc.in/1cZniuP
Budget statement - bbc.in/1bJAZBf
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
Reverse Chronological order with latest update at top

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:17 BST</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:17 BST</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:14 BST</td>
<td>There will be an urgent question on planning in the Commons at 11.30am, according to Paul Waugh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:11 BST</td>
<td>The Press Association has just snapped this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:11 BST</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 BST</td>
<td>And here are the main points from the Nick Clegg interviews. I've taken the quotes from PoliticsHome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 BST</td>
<td>• Clegg said that the current planning laws needed to be changed because they were “frankly useless”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 BST</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Live Blogging – key characteristics

Often contain multimedia elements and make generous use of links

As it happened: England riots day five

Key points

- PM David Cameron says every action will be taken to restore order, with contingency plans for water cannon to be available at 24 hours notice.
- MPs and peers recalled to Parliament for Thursday to debate riots.
- It is relatively peaceful across England on Wednesday night after rioting in several cities on Tuesday and in London the previous three nights.
- PM says police have legal backing to use any tactics necessary, including using baton rounds.
- Three men, aged 31, 30 and 21, died when they were hit by a car in Birmingham as they protected property.
- Three courts in London will stay open Wednesday night to deal with the number of people charged.

Report

Reporters: Anna Browning, Vanessa Barford, Fiona Bailey and Rebecca Cafe.

1321: The BBC’s Clive Coleman at Highbury Corner magistrates’ court says many are being committed for sentencing at the crown court. The reason for this is the magistrates’ bench feel the riot was such an aggravating feature to the burglary that the crown court ought to sentence because they have additional powers. The magistrates feel that they had insufficient powers to sentence for a single count of burglary. They could only sentence for six months whereas that could be up to 10 years at the crown court.

1341: The Met Police release a second tranche of images of people they would like to speak to about the recent disorder affecting parts of London, as part of Operation Withern.

1340: Greater Manchester Police release a first batch of 17 CCTV images of suspects wanted in connection with the rioting and looting last night in Manchester and Salford.

1343: Ministry of Justice statement: "We have enough prison places for those that are sentenced today. There is a prison place for everyone."
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, on November 11, 1918, which is why November 11 is now celebrated as Veterans Day. The United States and the United Kingdom declared victory over Germany on November 11, 1918, after the signing of the armistice that ended World War I. Today, it is a time to honor and remember all who served in the United States military.

The Tory Treasury Twitter feed (an official account) has hit back.
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 Milad Frqf edited by Margarita Noriega (Reuters) June 14 at 7:52 PM
Live Blogging – key characteristics

Corrections flagged explicitly

12.37pm: Nick Raynsford did not say who he was referring to, but on Twitter my former colleague Gaby Hinsliff suggests this might have been a reference to Jenny Watson, head of the Electoral Commission. Watson has complained about being the victim of some particular hostile briefing from an unnamed government source.

**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.
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

Minimum aggregated mins. on page over 24 hours

- Live Blog: 700,000 mins
- Picture Gallery 1: 200,000 mins
- Article: 200,000 mins
- Picture Gallery 2: 100,000 mins
Where do you access news?

- 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%

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
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

- 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) vs 12% (UK)

- **Non-sporting events like the Oscars or X Factor**
  - US: 13%
  - UK: 12%

- **Unfolding political stories like an election or budget**
  - US: 58%
  - UK: 75%

- **Breaking news stories like natural disasters**
  - US: 74%
  - UK: 80%

- **Sports events like the Olympic Games**
  - US: 33%
  - UK: 54%
“It is sometimes a bit of a shock to be reminded that, in operational and practical fact, the medium is the message”

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

• **Opportunities**
  • Report real-time irrespective of resources
  • Increase participation
  • Rebuilt trust
Cumbria shootings - as they unfold

• 12 people killed
• Body of girl found
• Police dismiss possibility of suicide

6.00pm: We're going to take a look at what's been happening in Cumbria. Photo:

Benulek
02 June 2010 1:18pm

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.

drbendyspoogun
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.
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.*
Usability

• 25% readers find live blogs **difficult to follow** (Thurman and Newman 2013):
  • Reverse chronological orders
  • Most newsworthy info can appear anywhere

• Best practice:
  • Provide headline and summary of key developments
  • Update this contextual information regularly

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**NSA files live – Australia offered to share information on its citizens**

- New Snowden document shows Australia offer
- UK watchdog urges anti-terror power change
- New to the NSA revelations? Catch up here
- What do the NSA files mean for you?
- NSA and surveillance made simple – animation
“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 DEREK PERALTA
October 30, 2012 10:40 AM

Updated at 11:16 p.m. ET, Not Touched During Sandy.

The Cotton Bureau tweeted this photo of soldiers standing guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on Wednesday, October 24, 2012, after the nation was hit by Hurricane Sandy.

Here is the Twitter caption, as posted by the Cotton Bureau:

Regarding the above soldier’s uniform, which shows the picture taken on the Facebook page, the three soldiers pictured are from the 3rd Infantry Regiment. The soldier at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is the line of duty unit, and the men who have never been exposed to Hurricane Sandy, though they only serve as the Washington D.C. area.

The date: 11/03/2012, is incorrect, as it is October 30, 2012.

The U.S. Army has more information on this story.

The picture was taken at 3:31 p.m. on October 24, 2012, when the National Guard tweeted this story. As they arrived at the time, there was a plane flying over the area. The plane’s shadow was visible on the ground, and the sky was clear. The soldiers were standing at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and the national guard was present. The photo was taken with a Canon EOS 7D camera, in RAW format. The photo was developed using Adobe Photoshop CS6. The final image was exported as a JPEG file.

Previous Photo: Soldier's Mom And Dad Post About Their Son's Injury

Next Photo: Soldier's Mom And Dad Post About Their Son's Injury
Making corrections

- Acknowledge within the live blog as quickly as possible.
- AND go back to the original post.
Usability, balance, accuracy, convenience: UK readers’ attitudes

- 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:
  - Agree: 40%
  - Disagree: 20%

- LIVE news pages can be difficult to understand because the story is broken into short updates:
  - Agree: 50%
  - Disagree: 10%

- LIVE news pages are a convenient way of following news while I am at work:
  - Agree: 60%
  - Disagree: 10%

- I worry about the accuracy of the information on LIVE news pages:
  - Agree: 30%
  - Disagree: 20%
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
Likelihood of users to participate in news formats at Guardian.co.uk

Source: Thurman and Walters (2012), n=189
% user-generated content

ScribbleLIVE

Guardian live blog
Newspapers & TV news websites

Boston Marathon Bombings (n=3)
2012-13 Egypt protests (n=2)
Birth of Prince George (n=3)
Wimbledon 2013 (n=3)
Guardian.co.uk (Thurman & Walters, 2012)
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

Antiehypocrite
26 June 2013 9:23am
Let me guess...... Goldman Sachs was advising

kizbot » Antiehypocrite
26 June 2013 8:30am
@Antiehypocrite 26 June 2013 9:23am. Get clipFix for Firefox.
Lol... boat me 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, unemployment 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
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.

Twitter @theekarami

Kayhan, close to Khamenei is reporting 75% turnout, that's 37.5 million people.

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)
Official sources

Non-official sources

Non-technology-mediated source interaction

Technology-mediated source interaction

ScribbleLIVE

The Guardian