


Neil Thurman & Ben Lupton

Convergence calls:

Multimedia story telling at British News
Websites

International Symposium on Online Journalism: UT Austin April 5 2008



“As an industry, many of us have been remarkably, unaccountably, complacent.”

“The emphasis online is shifting from text only to text with video.”

Rupert Murdoch, speech to American Society of Editors, 2005

The response:

Trinity Mirror plc



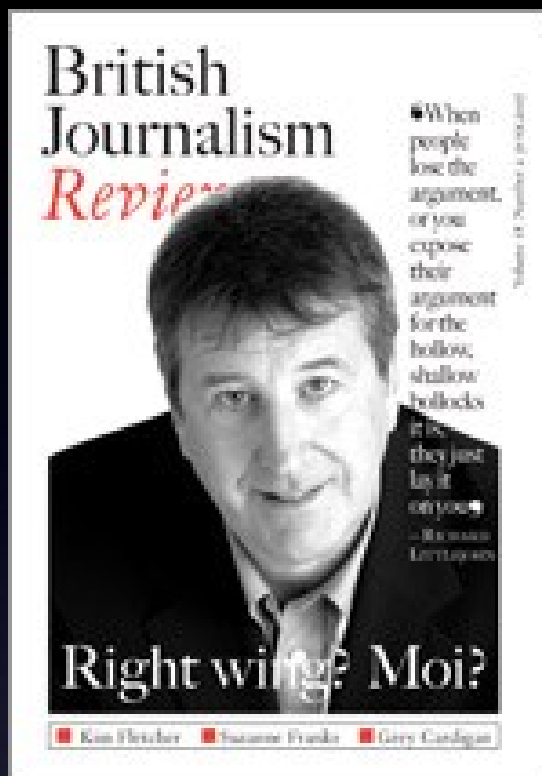
“an overhaul of all its regional newspaper websites...greater emphasis on multimedia”

Telegraph.co.uk

“‘news on demand’ video service”

guardian.co.uk

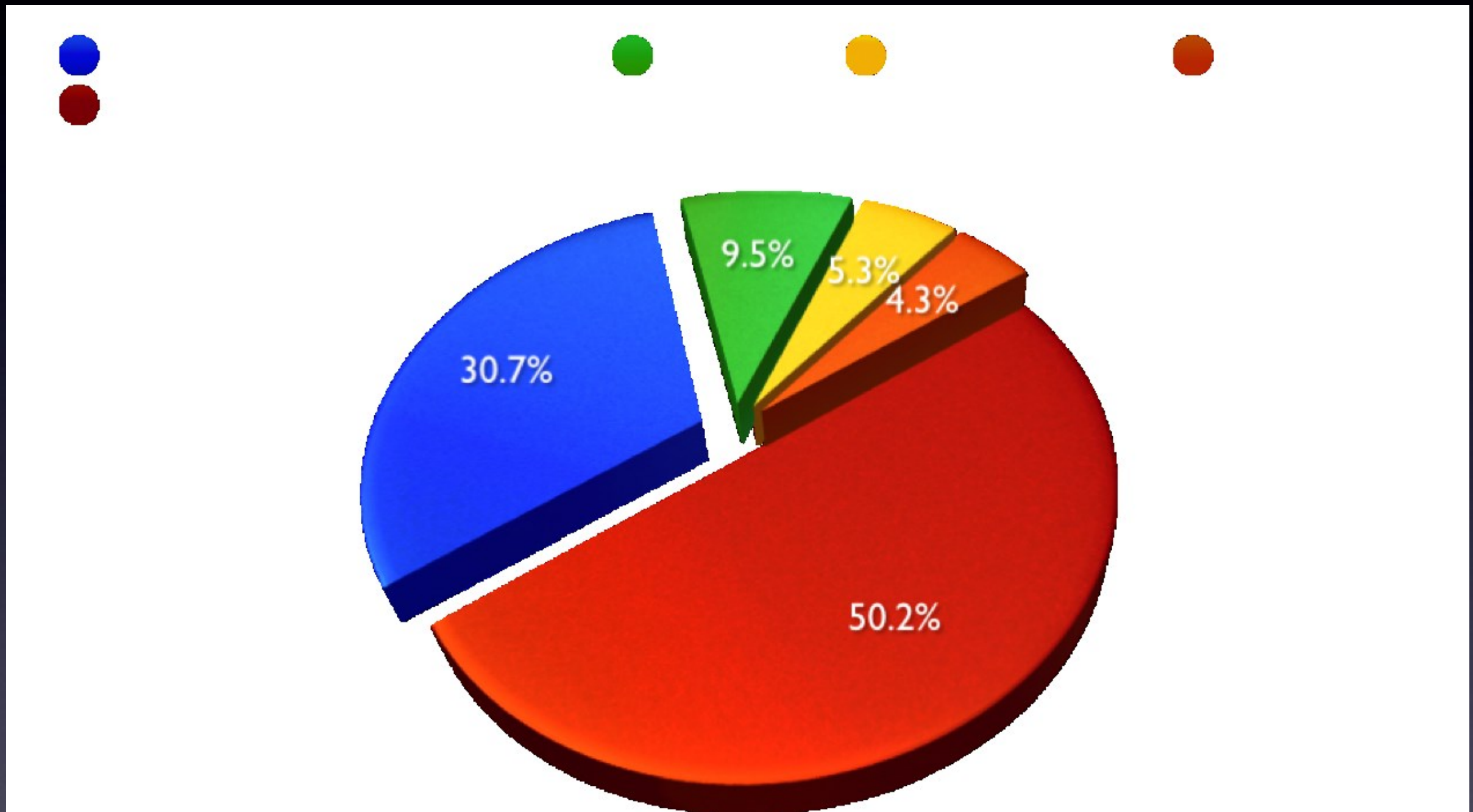
“serious investment in its own team”



“The printed newspaper is in crises but of course it has a future. Multimedia has to be an answer.”

Bill Hagerty, Editor of the ‘British Journalism Review’, 2006

UK's Online Video Market - June 2007



Interviewees:

Interviews conducted in June/July 2007



Steve Bennedik

Editor, Sky News Networked Media

Pete Clifton

Head of BBC News Interactive

Steve Herrmann

Editor, BBC News Interactive

Neil McIntosh

Head of Editorial Development,
Guardian.co.uk

James Montgomery

Editor, FT.com

Steve Purcell

Editor, Mirror.co.uk

Ed Roussel

Digital Editor, Telegraph Media
Group

Anne Spackman

Editor, Times Online

Marc Webber

Assistant Editor, News, The Sun
Online

Online video an opportunity for newspapers:

“They are the ones that break stories in the main...they are not weighed down by the baggage” of broadcast media.



Steve Purcell, Editor, Mirror.co.uk

“The cost of production in television is sky high when anybody can produce video for the Net. Will what we do be as good? Probably not. Does it need to be? No.”



Ed Roussel, Digital Editor, Telegraph Media Group



“People from [BBC] TV news and news gathering who don’t really get what we’re doing.”

Pete Clifton, **Head of BBC News Interactive**



“We’ve cut up television news and stuck them on web stories.”

Steve Herrmann, **Editor, BBC News Interactive**

“Far too often, it’s not performed a very useful function at all.”

Pete Clifton, **Head of BBC News Interactive**



“the bloke with the immaculate
hair”



Pete Clifton, **Head of BBC News Interactive**

BBC Embedded Flash Video Trial (Hits per 100 visitors)



Stand-alone



Embedded



“It had set the standard...created the expectation that watching video on the web was going to be that quick, that simple.”

BBC eve Herrmann, Editor, BBC News Interactive

“Video shouldn’t live outside or separately from the rest of what [they] do...That’s absolutely the key thing for us - how do we embed the stuff? It’s primary home has to be the story.”

guardian.co.uk

Neil McIntosh, [Head of Editorial Development, Guardian.co.uk](http://Guardian.co.uk)





“They’ll probably end up doing everything really badly.”

Pete Clifton, **Head of BBC News Interactive**

“This is not robo journo, this is not us trying to get journalists to have a pen in one hand and a camera in the other...they are distinctive disciplines.”

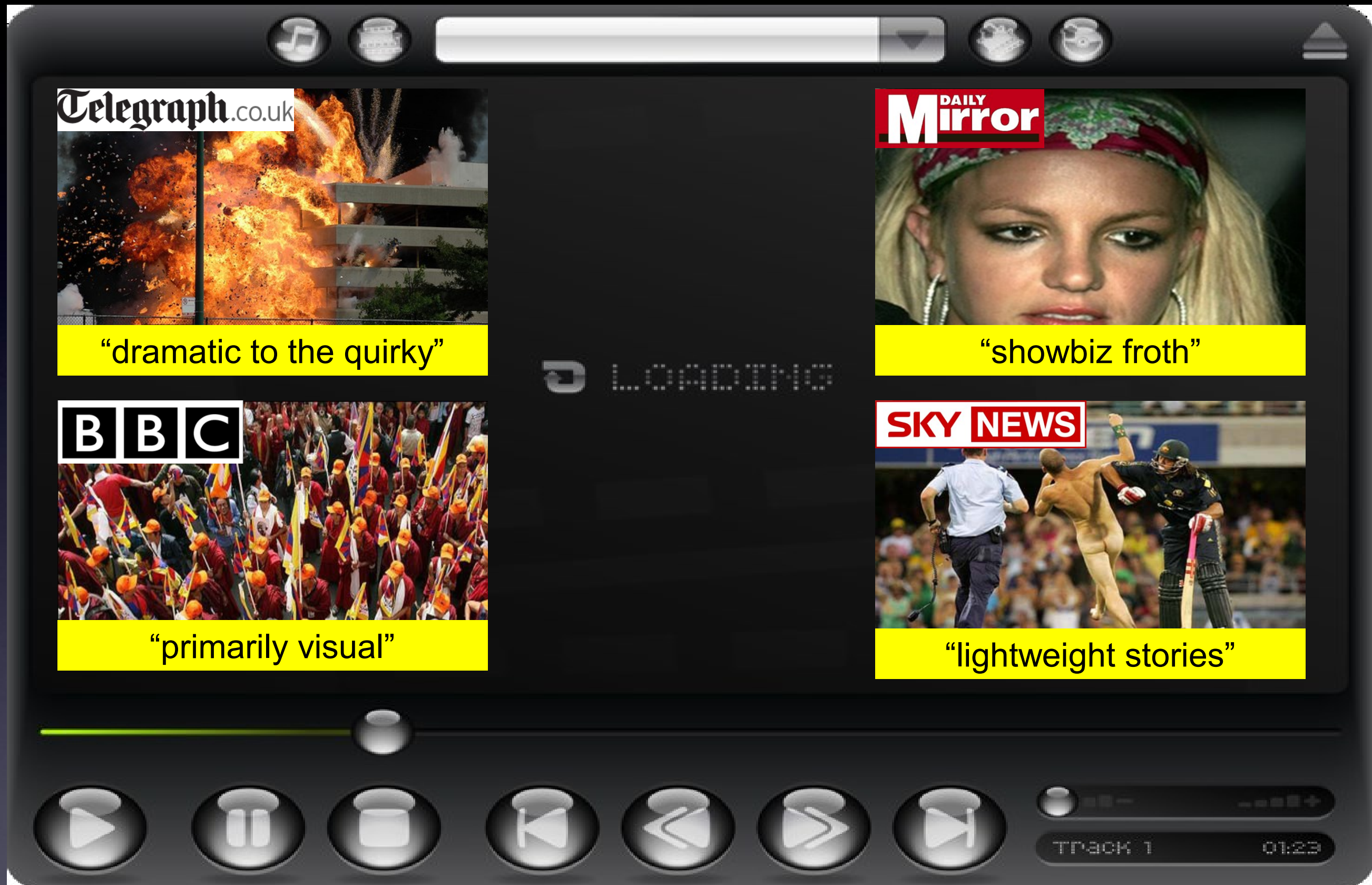


Marc Webber, **Assistant Editor, News, Sun Online**

“I don’t think [print and multimedia] are necessarily a complementary set of skills.”



Neil McIntosh, **Head of Editorial Development, Guardian.co.uk**





“when the bloke smashed up the [\$1.5 million] vintage Ferrari”



Pete Clifton, **Head of BBC News Interactive**

“Convergence means less process stories, investigative reporting, international news, and in depth coverage.”

Ben Scott, “A Contemporary History of Journalism”, 2005



“We’re giving people what they want but hopefully we’re also leading them into a whole new world of consumption.”



Steve Bennedik, Editor, Sky News Networked Media

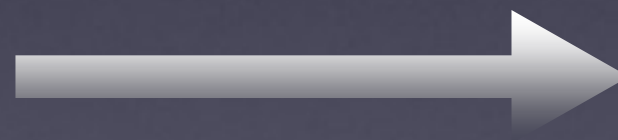
BBC iPlayer '1.3 million unique users a week' Me



<http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2008/feb/20/bbc.digitalmedia1>

“a dilution in story choice as multimedia newsrooms cover fewer and fewer stories.” Ben Scott, “A Contemporary History of Journalism”, 2005

Third Party Providers:



Video: Partnerships VS In House

Mirror.co.uk & ROO Group: “A bloody mess...relying on American led content.”



Steve Purcell, Editor, Mirror.co.uk

Sun Online & Press Association: “Contract will kick the bucket.”



Marc Webber, Assistant Editor, News, [Sun Online](http://SunOnline)

“Specialist video is a unique selling point for newspapers.”

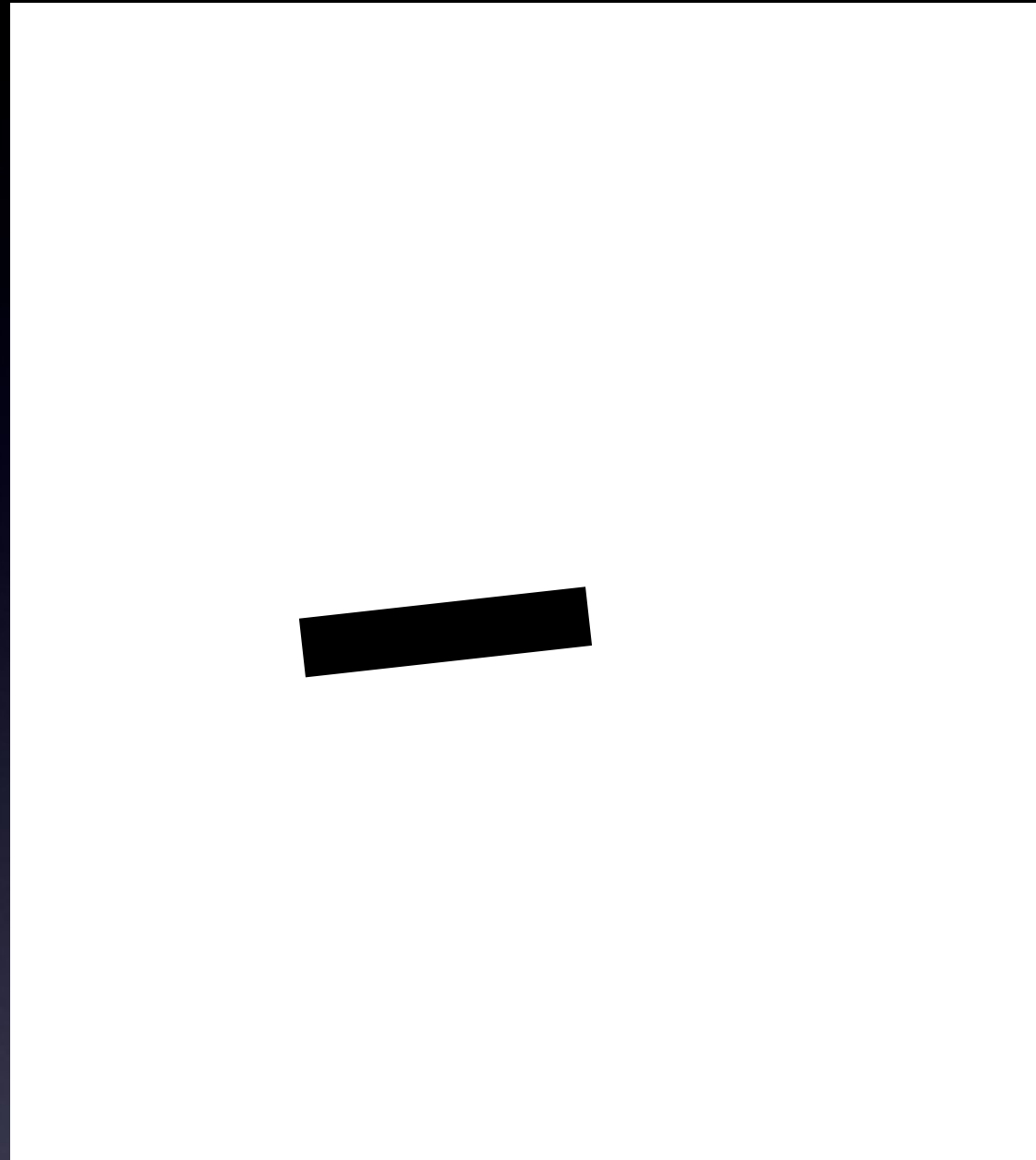


James Montgomery, Editor, FT.com

“We’ll produce original pieces of video journalism built from the ground up.”



Neil McIntosh, Head of Editorial Development, Guardian.co.uk



“We want to bring the right kind of video through to the website.”



Pete Clifton, **Head of BBC News Interactive**

‘Video use is now central to online publishing’

Press Gazette, 22/10/07

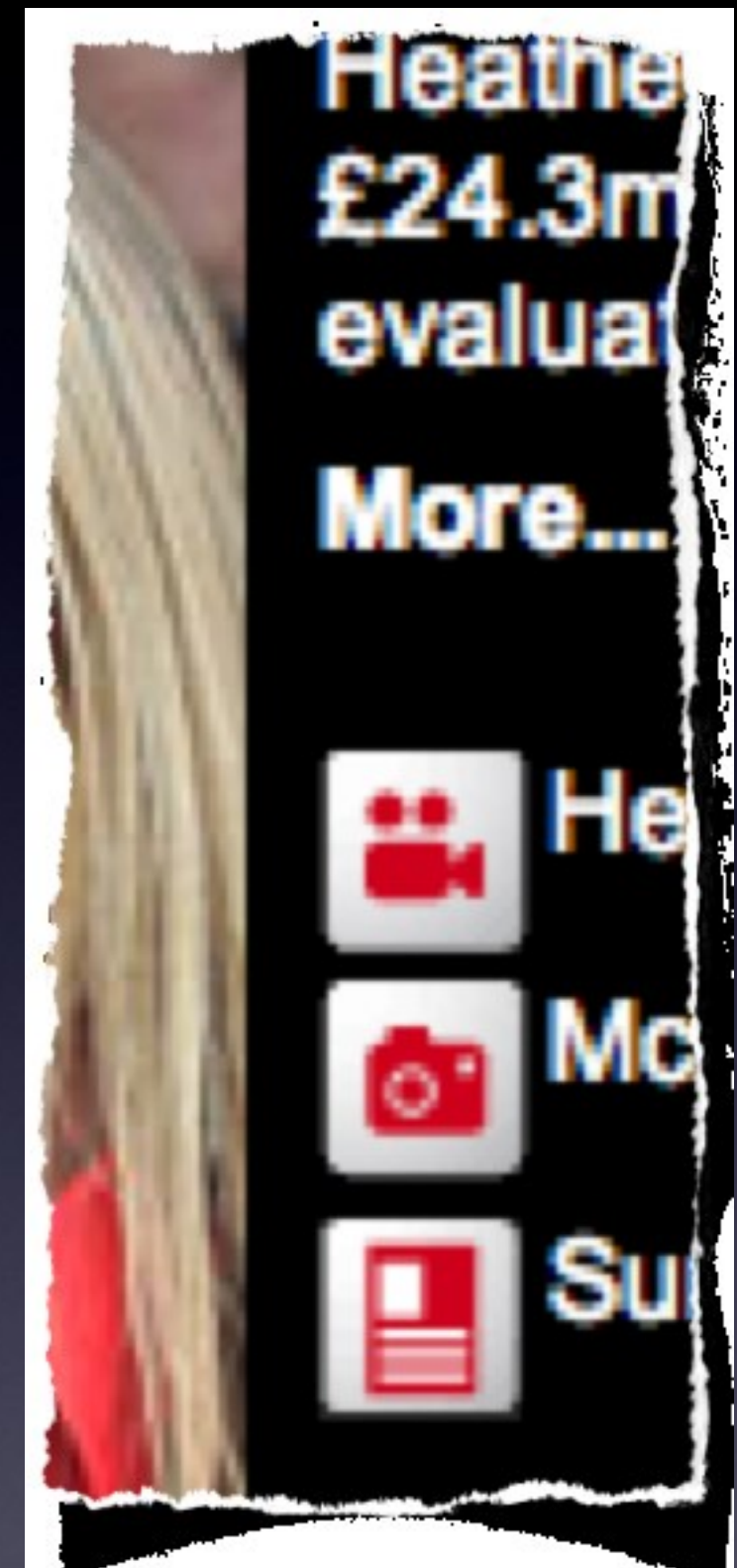
“The vast majority of our audience comes for text.”


BBC Steve Herrmann, **Editor, BBC News Interactive**

“Video was not the first point of contact.”

TIMESONLINE Anne Spackman, **Editor, Times Online**

“In five years, text will probably be more dominant.”





“We have unique content to differentiate ourselves in a world where news is becoming increasingly commoditized.”

“We have to refashion what our web presence is. It can’t be what it too often is today: a bland repurposing of our print content. Instead it will need to offer compelling and relevant content. Deep, deep local news.”

Rupert Murdoch, speech to American Society of Editors, 2005