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Abstract

During the last decade, social media has had a great impact on the way we communicate. It has also expanded our awareness of the world.

However it has become harder for the lay person to find news, because of too many conflicting interests in the mass media industry on one hand, and simply too much free information available on the other.

This report documents my study of how social media has affected the way we collect, consume and share news. I describe how democratization of information has made some things easy, but some other things hard - filtering data to find meaningful content has become harder.

My studies were targeted mainly at people younger than 30, and mainly in India, and much of its design is informed by problems characteristic to the Indian context. So while I do not explicitly target my end result at the Indian market, a news network by its very nature needs to be global, and this process reflects that.

I go on to use Design Methods including Brainstorming, Participatory Workshops and Service Design theory to arrive at a product that aims to provide people a way to stay up to date with meaningful and relevant news.

I propose a social network for individuals to exchange news with each other. I try to understand what makes some pieces of information more important than others, and how a network can self filter information so that participants can get high quality content.

In the final result, I describe the framework of this network and how people would contribute to it and consume from it.
Introduction

Because of social media, the field of information dissemination today is going through a transformation. The decline of newspapers has been widely discussed, and the industries and hierarchies that had their origins in the print revolution, and later in the television boom, are now breaking down and newer models are taking their place.

“The news industry is returning to something closer to the coffee house. The internet is making news more participatory, social, diverse and partisan, reviving the discursive ethos of the era before ... this will have profound effects on society and politics.”

The Economist thus compares social media of today to social interactions before the existence of mass media: Here are some of the main benefits of these changes:

**News is more participatory and social**

Everyday an increasing number of people take active part in creating, curating, distributing and discussing news. As with any medium, the number of consumers is still much higher than the number of creators, following the 1% rule of internet culture. But even though the extent of participation varies, the proportion is going up.

A variety of media are used: social networks like Twitter and Facebook, blogs, comments and discussion groups, internet forums, news aggregators, topical / special interest portals.

**News is more diverse and partisan**

Minority opinions and non-mainstream opinions of people who are underrepresented in mainstream news, have now found voices in social networks. It has also resulted in the increasing availability of partisan news.

Choice: Every consumer can choose exactly what he wants to see. Ideally, the internet represents the ultimate democratization, where the user has a huge variety of choices at hand. This is also true in the case of TV channels, and of individuals who are social media influencers, i.e. people who have many followers on Facebook or Twitter.

**News is easier to access**

News is available immediately, minute by minute, as events unfold. Access to radio, television and newspapers is cheaper for the consumer than ever has been. The material cost of distribution over the internet is almost nil, and there is an expectation that information must be free.
These changes have also led to problems, and people now are finding it harder to know which information to trust, which information is relevant, and whether they are receiving a holistic view of the world when they browse the internet.

**Information overload and curation**

The statistics below give a sense of the scale of information bombardment.

- Number of tweets per day in 2013: 500 million
- Percentage of news on twitter: 3.6% - 18 million tweets
- Number of new blog posts per day: 2 million
- Number of hours of video posted on YouTube: 864,000 hours

While the reader now has infinite choice in what to consume, he also faces the task of filtering all this content.

In the early days of the internet, content was organised in manually curated portals like Yahoo Directories. Later Google entered the scene and introduced a method of sifting through all this content, using algorithms that mainly judged popularity. Even today, any content that rises to the top in a search or on a Facebook feed is largely based on popularity, with more weight assigned to your social circle.

Facts versus opinions: A social network does not attempt to distinguish facts from rumours from opinions and mixes them with advertisements and propaganda. Each of these can be disguised or perceived as any of the others.

In fact the business models of all major internet corporations including Facebook and Google directly depend on advertisements placed alongside information, intentionally blurring the lines between the two.

**Viral and Meme Effects**

People quickly noticed that certain kinds of content seemed to become more popular than others, and go viral. Several studies have attempted to understand what makes some online content viral. In addition to typical indicators like how interesting, surprising, useful or relevant the content is, the studies find that physiologically arousing content whether positive arousal (awe, thrill, excitement, surprise, discovery, amusement) or negative arousal (anger, revulsion, disgust, frustration) will be shared more than low arousal emotions (relief, sadness, depression), probably because these are characterized by deactivation or inaction as opposed to the former which are indicated by high activation.

Advertisers have also started taking advantage of viral / meme effects.

All this means that “important” news will not necessarily propagate socially unless it is able to take advantage of these effects.

**Filter bubbles**

Eli Pariser describes the filter bubble effect as the result of providers like Google and Facebook using algorithms to tailor content for their readers.

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**Facebook Memology 2011**

1. Death of Osama bin Laden
2. Packers win Super Bowl
3. Casey Anthony found not guilty
4. Charlie Sheen
5. Death of Steve Jobs
6. The UK Royal Wedding
7. Death of Amy Winehouse
8. Call of Duty: Modern Warfare
9. Libya
10. Hurricane Irene

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*Jacob Cyriac* Social News
The result, according to Pariser is that users get less exposure to conflicting viewpoints and are isolated intellectually in their own information bubble. This kind of bubble has negative implications for civic discourse.

Ethan Zuckerman of Globalvoices suggests that contrary to expectation, the ease of information exchange over the internet has not led to an exchange of ideas between cultures, even though the exchange of goods is globalised. He says that the exchange of bits is not, after all, like the exchange of atoms and makes the states that conversations on the internet today are contained in islands segregated by language.

He says that if you watched a television broadcast in the United States in the 1970s, 35 to 40 percent of it would have been international news on a nightly news broadcast. Today that’s down to about 12 to 15 percent.

For example if you speak English, you have access to 26.8% of the internet.

If the same analysis is done for social networks, an English speaker would have access to an even smaller percentage of all conversations in the world.
Credibility

There is a worry about credibility because the internet and social networks have made information extremely easy to access and at the same time also lowered the barrier to publish or disseminate information. The result is that much more information is available, and more easily accessible now than ever before.

Unlike traditional mass media, editorial processes in the online world vary greatly from platform to platform. Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and other social networks have very little moderation (just like websites) and free speech is limited chiefly by local laws. Some other social forums might have a moderation policies, enforced either by the community or by professional editors. These variations make it difficult for a consumer to critically evaluate every piece of information he might come across.

Measures of authority such as identity and reputation have taken new forms with new media. While popularity on a network (number of followers) might indicate an author's reputation, identities can be spoofed (fake celebrity accounts), or creators can choose to remain anonymous. While in the past there were professional curators for factchecking, assessing information for quality and subjectivity, now the consumer himself has to shoulder this responsibility.

Many factors determine credibility for users including factors concerning the source (credentials, trustworthiness, likeability, social location, expertise), the receiver (relevance, interest, beliefs, stereotypes) and the message (familiarity, presentation, plausibility).

Research from the University of California (Metzger and Flanagin 2008) attempts to model credibility based on these distinctions, and groups them into certain categories. Conferred credibility is when a well-regarded entity recommends a source, and reputed credibility is based on the reputation of the source or medium which can be perpetuated through personal and social networks. Tabulated credibility comes from peer rating systems. Emergent credibility is created by people through group engagement, as seen in social media. A feature of this is that credibility is no longer connected to a central singular authority.
Primary Research

My primary research had 3 parts:

- News Habits Questionnaire
- A study and comparison of 6 people’s social feeds
- A study of the News and Media Industry in India

News Habits

I designed a survey to learn more about people’s news habits. I surveyed approximately 50 people, nearly half from India, and the rest from Europe, North America and China. There were an equal number of males and females. All the people were in the age group of 21 to 35, basically my own generation, all millennials. These people had experienced a fair amount of newspaper reading from when they were young, and also good exposure to new media today, including social networks.

My intention was to gather data about:

- When do people consume news: i.e. - what time of the day, how much time is spent in each session, how these sessions are spread out across the day how they fit into the person’s daily routine?
- Which portals or publishers are used, and on what media: whether, print, television, websites, social networks
- Which social networks are used the most, and how much time is spent on social media, whether for news or simply networking. I also asked them to personally estimate what percentage of the content on their social feeds they would consider as news.
- I asked whether they tend to follow local news or global news, and in what proportion.
- I asked whether they prefer to read about topics they have an interest in, or whether the news they consume contains a more general broader overview of topics. I also asked where their interests lie over a range of topics like politics, economics, entertainment, health, etc.

To summarise my findings:

- 31% read a newspaper.
- 32% watch TV news.
- 67% spend 30 minutes each day, following news online or via apps.

Basically, about a third of people do still consume news over old mass media, i.e. a newspaper or TV. These people spend 30 minutes or less each day doing so.
However, a much larger percentage - two-thirds of my survey sample - spend as much time or more reading the news online or through apps and other digital sources.

Just as many people, i.e. two-thirds claim that they are always connected to their social networks and receive updates throughout the day. They follow these updates in short spurts that can add up to more than an hour each day.

Some of the highlights of my findings were:

**SOCIAL NETWORK ENGAGEMENT**

**Actively seeking out** → **Passively aware**

The model of engagement is changing. People are less likely to seek out information. Instead they are kept aware by their continual updates in their social streams.

On social networks they seek out information about people rather than topics. It's often an update from a person that triggers their interest in a particular topic and causes them to look it up.

When asked how much of their social feeds they consider to be news, people said about 21% on average, and this is very different from actual numbers, which suggest that the proportion of news on any social network is around 4%.

In any case, this is what people remembered. It could be that the what they considered news had higher recall value, that it engaged their minds more, and they subconsciously assigned those pieces more importance than other social content. It could be argued that this indicates that they would like to see more news, if the other content they came across had only temporal value, or merely passing importance, and had no long term interest.

**TYPE OF CONTENT**

**Over-estimate the proportion of news in their social feeds**

The last point: people are certainly biased towards news that is more personal to them. They prefer local news rather than global news. Even more strongly, they prefer to know about subjects that are interesting to them, subjects related to their own area of study, profession or hobbies, rather than topics of a more general interest. Importantly, most of my survey sample is conscious of and admits to these biases.

I feel like I should have added one more question to the survey: “How would you rate your own awareness about current affairs of the world?”. This question would have given me a way to compare people’s awareness with where they want to be, and I could have tested my assumption that people are not conscious of the degree to which they are missing out on general information, ever since they moved over from newspapers and other mass media to more organic social networks.
I watch TV news only for the live debates.

I have phases where my interests in world affairs peaks and then diminishes.

NDTV app on my phone, NDTV website on desktop (as it’s the shortest name and easy to type)

Worry / Embarrassment about missing out.
Social Feed Study

This survey led me to the next part of my research, where I tried to find out what actually constitutes people's social feeds.

I chose 6 people, 3 in India, 2 in the USA and 1 in Japan as my subjects, and studied their Facebook feeds over a week. Some of these people were connected to each other as friends, but were located in different countries. Others were in the same country but did not know each other. All were connected to me in Sweden, so I could compare their feeds with my own.

I asked each of them to monitor their Facebook Newsfeeds in the course of normal Facebooking, and share with me, in a private group, every item that they thought was "news". News was defined as (a) any post that had information value (b) was interesting to people who did not know the author / their friends.

There could also be overlaps of personal and general interest news. For eg. a friend might have participated in or witnessed a sports match, concert, political rally or could be affected by weather or traffic or heavy snow. I was curious to study this kind of personal posts that also have general interest value because of their context, but I did not get any such posts within my small sample and one week time window.

My subjects had varying levels of social activity. As you can see in this data for one day, the less active Facebookers received 3 to 5 items of news, and the more users received more than 10.

I highlighted the posts in these feeds according to their:
Some of the patterns I attempted to observe:

- Whether certain genres of information tend to be circulated more on old media or new media.
- The relation between old and new media.
- The relation between nature of content, location and old and new media.
A study of the Mass Media Industry in India

I interviewed four people in the news industry in India, and studied various newspapers in an attempt to understand how mass media works in India.

**Payaswini Lipadhyay**
Financial Reporter at Mergermarket
Analyst at Pureheart Capital
Senior Correspondent at Bloomberg TV India
Assistant Producer at CNBC TV18

**Aayush Soni**
Freelance Journalist, New Delhi
The Caravan, Q2 India, Open, India Ink
India Real Time, Huffington Post
Former Staff Writer, Timeout Delhi

**Ruth Saldanha**
Correspondent-Associate Producer at CNBC TV18
Senior Assistant Producer at Bloomberg UTV

**Rohan Swamy**
Senior Sub Editor - NDTV Gadgets
Senior Assistant Producer at Bloomberg UTV

**THE NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY**

As can be expected with India, the industry is both vast and diverse.

There are 330 million total readers.

The 30 biggest newspapers in 23 major languages account for one third of all readership.

14569 other newspapers in 171 regional and other languages account for the remaining two thirds.

**TV AND RADIO**

The only radio broadcast available nationwide for free is the Government owned All India Radio, which also broadcasts in all 22 major regional languages.

Similarly, the national TV Doordarshan is the only broadcaster available free of cost everywhere, commercial satellite TV networks are expensive. In any case television is useful only where electricity is available and during the (few) hours of the day that power is actually supplied.

Additionally both the national networks do not have an independent editorial board, and have in the past censored or refrained from showing controversial programmes.
Mobile phone usage is fairly high - 875 million out of 1.2 billion subscriber which would suggest 75% penetration, but these numbers are skewed heavily in favour of urban areas, where each person has on average 2.2 subscriptions. The vast majority of mobile network coverage is now 2G, and the high cost of bandwidth restricts useful access to internet.

Despite this, innovative solutions like Swara have taken advantage of the fact that mobile phone connections allow interactivity, as opposed to one way mass media.

Swara (Sanskrit for voice) is a phone based community journalism model used in extreme rural parts of central India. To report a story, a citizen calls a number, and then receives a call back from the Swara. This is necessary so that people are not deterred by the cost of the call. At this point he can choose to listen to news stories, or record his own story. A team of journalists and trained volunteers verifies the recorded report before publishing it. 95% of callers called to listen in and Swara found they could not bear this cost. They went on to experiment with FM/AM radios cheaply modified to pick up broadcasts over the citizen/open frequency bands.

“Politically free, imprisoned by profit - A structural compulsion to lie”

In 2010 the Press Council of India released a report on the phenomenon of paid news in India, and accused the biggest media groups in the country of having indulged in this practice.

Some of the characteristics of paid news:

- Identical news articles appear in different newspapers eulogizing a political figure.
- So-called "rate cards" or "packages" are distributed by marketing executives of media houses that include "rates" for publication of "news" items that do not merely praise particular candidates but also criticize their political opponents.
- Media houses set up investment arms, such as MediaNet of the Times group, which offer private treaties. These treaties represent a unique business arrangement, where the media house picks up stakes and invests in companies. In return the companies receive discounted ads, favourable editorial coverage, and journalists sent on demand to cover their press events.
“Print not about to die soon”

Two of the journalists I interviewed highlighted that India is the only country where print media is still growing. Between 2001 and 2011, 203 million people were added to the literate population, and this user base still has a lot more room to grow. Since these people are at the bottom of the socio-economic pyramid, their cheapest access to newspapers is still via newspapers, and to a lesser extent, radio. These journalists acknowledge the influence of digital media but say that a massive shift to digital is not likely to take place within 10 to 15 years as predicted.

Corporate incest within corporate incest

Media monopolies are now part of much larger corporate monopolies. This is how The Hindu has described the phenomenon of rich politicians buying stakes in media houses and corporate barons contesting elections to enter Parliament.

In states like Tamil Nadu, entire TV networks are directly owned and operated by political parties. The sponsorship is far from subtle; in fact these TV channels are named after their political patrons. Interestingly, journalist P. Sainath notes that the phenomenon of paid news is less prevalent in the states where there is overt political sponsorship. My own requests for comment from people in these states suggest that they are well aware of these conflicts of interest and at least claim to be not influenced by propaganda.

Filter bubbles will continue / the purpose of news

I presented the two Time stories above to journalists for their comments on conflicting information published just two days apart in two different sections of the same online magazine.
On filter bubbles, they commented that each piece of news was written to cater to the Business and Technology audiences (or bubbles) respectively, and possibly the second article could be a paid piece in response to the second, posted on pressure from investors.

Either way, they could offer no way for a reader to know which to trust and said that the news consumer merely has more bubbles to choose from now; making it easier to form an opinion but harder to form a balanced opinion.

They said that people seek out more and better information for decision making, for instance when buying stocks or looking for a college or for real estate. For everything else, they quite cynically said that people watch news largely for entertainment.

**Editorial biases**

The journalists frankly admitted editorial biases of particular publications, and even admitted to influence of corporate stakeholders influence over editorial standpoint, and said it was hard to detach from the trickle down effects.

**Social Media in the News today**

The journalists said it was now common to use Twitter and other social networks to attract people and feed traffic to their news websites. Journalists also maintain their own social media accounts and appreciate the lack of filters or gags on these platforms.

However they discussed examples of their own house CNN-IBN where journalists’ personal views on social media have conflicted with the “house” position, leading to tension between journalists and their corporate owners.

It was also common to use social media to provide constant updates on current events that are unfolding live.

Also, corporate owners have been known to test the market by leaking rumours of future economic decisions, like mergers, buyouts, and investments. One of my interviewees (a business journalist) noted that noted how this old practice has become easier with social media, and is one of the defining characteristics of business news. A number of analysts comment on these rumours and businessmen are happy to use these free predictions to gauge the position of stockholders and the market before going forward with the business deal.

*Jacob Cyriac* Social News
A Fragmented Industry: The Rural Urban Gap

There is a huge gap between urban and rural media, and a somewhat smaller yet notable gap between the media of different languages.

As seen in my analysis of the Times of India news content, the top 5% of India read very little about the bottom 95%. In fact, while newspapers have full time reporters to cover fashion, eating out and movies, there are no correspondents for rural employment, agriculture, or labour. These issues seem to be commercially unviable to cover. News coverage is indeed dictated by commercial interests.

Bridging the Gap - Gaon connection

My interviewees also described newer mass media models emerging. They cited the example of Gaon Connection, a paper that is published out of several villages in an east Indian state, and claims to serve India's rural majority with stories and issues relevant to their context.

These hyper-local experiments serve only 10 - 15 villages per edition, but share resources like journalists, operations and printing, and use local micro-economies for advertising support.

They draw attention to the fact that India's SEC-A is a tiny group and that major news.

The Guardian

The bubble I have described encloses divides economic classes. Other bubbles enclose social, cultural, linguistic, religious and national groups, as shown in the map of the Guardian's world of coverage. The point to note is not that the UK itself is bloated — that is expected and correct — the point is that among other countries, some (like Iraq) are disproportionately larger than others (like China).
Research: Conclusions

People
We see a change in the news consuming habits of millennials, and generations after them. The type of awareness has changed, from the past where people depended on a few similar sources (mass media) when people had a broad general knowledge of current affairs, to the present day, when there is the diversity of information sources means that different people have different areas of specialised knowledge.

There is a general feeling among all my interviewees that their awareness of current affairs could be better, they recognise that the quality of mass has declined and that social media has not yet provided any worthwhile solutions.

Commerce
With mass media, increased competition with the existing players and from new media has led to the increase of tabloid style journalism, where papers and TV channels must cater directly to the lowest common denominator of material that people want to see, simply because advertisers demand the largest possible audience.

This need to sell news to an audience has created an individualistic news consumer, and a gap has emerged between what is important to the world and what is important to individuals. Commercial media are unable to represent the interests of sections of society without economic power, simply because there is no return.

Institutions
Established mass media institutions (like newspapers) still hold influence in places where they have long history, because they claim to follow codes that are meant to somehow protect everybody’s interests. But similar institutions command much less respect in Egypt, India and Turkey. In former case, the of who controls these media houses and why they have authority is difficult to answer. For example, in the UK, most of OfCom’s top decision makers are ex-BBC and Channel 4 executives, representing a tiny of section of the socio-economic and cultural groups in the UK.

Content
There is no easy way of evaluating material on the internet. There is especially no way of evaluating material on social media, since the source is obscured. As a result, choosing is much harder and people often fall back to whatever is the cheapest (free / ad supported), easiest to access (automatic social updates that come to you rather than visiting a news site), easiest to consume (video over text) or easiest to understand.

Proximity is defined as how closely connected a reader is to a particular piece of news, either because it directly affected his life, or it was connected to a subject of interest, whether study or profession, or a person or place of interest. My research told me that proximity has a great bearing on how people treat news, because they have very little knowledge or context to judge distant events, and their judgements are based on preconceptions or prejudice.

Jacob Cyriac
Social News
IDEATION

1. Map world news top stories for international news.
   - News by location
   - Location context
   - News encyclopedia

2. Map of the internet with the areas you explore
   - Map of a city
   - Topics

3. Verifying network
   - Filter unverified
   - Crowd source verified

4. Trace your mind maps / mental journey / people / places

5. Map of the world with regions colored:
   - Dolphins
   - Other places

6. People tend to point differently.
   - This also applies to younger children / new generation.

7. Ideation
   - Idea generation
   - Brainstorming
   - Mind mapping
Here are some of my initial ideas. Inspiration? Objectives of Ideation? Methods used? Pictures of sketches?

**Visualizing context**

While reading a news story, a person can see the data or impact of that story visualised in a graphic or map, to put the story or issue in context with the region and world.

For example, a story about the smog in China should bring up pollutions maps of Beijing and the world. (Objective: supporting claims with data. Make it easier for the reader to build context)

A story about workers in Foxconn's iPhone factories should bring up maps / visualisation of wages and labour rights across the world. Meaningful comparisons of China, the USA, Bangladesh and Sweden will give the reader a holistic picture.

**Sharing only good content**

A user is shown visually which pieces of news are verified and credible, and which ones are unsourced and controversial. The unverified parts of an article could be faded out in lighter text, making them harder to read. Additionally, sharing an unverified article could be made more difficult, for example, “good” articles can be shared with friends just by pressing a button, but to share an unsourced piece, the user might have to press longer or harder on the same button.

**Pen Pals / News pals**

The idea of having a friend in another country, who tells you what is going on there, from his or her point of view, or how the events there affect them. The meaning of events in a distant place are made much more real by finding a connection through a friend.

Each person could write a piece of news (local, yet not personal news) to share with their friends. And each person receives one piece of news from each of their friends.
Build your own newspaper

Build your own newspaper with news from around the world, with some simple input parameters for number of pages, topics and regions covered, depth, etc. - Print and read or even distribute. Similarly, one could tailor make news podcasts or video bulletins.

The main difference is that people treat content differently when it is curated and compiled into a finite work. Each piece is treated as one out of a few chosen articles, and therefore will receive more attention than if the same article had been a blog post on the internet.

Cross connecting topics of interest with places of interest

Marie is interested in base jumping and was looking for remote ultra-high cliffs in the Himalayas to jump from and break records. Her research and subsequent visits to the Himalayas taught her a lot about the Sino Indian border conflict of 1960s, as well as about the culture of the region.

Direct Q&A with Public figures

A forum can be created to ask public figures direct questions, and they can make direct public statements in response and even hold discussions, eliminating misquotes.

Rating credibility

Sentence by sentence, getting users votes on credibility, mapping agreement, support, and using these to build a cumulative picture of the article.

Understanding how people describe their reaction to news pieces - in what ways do they tag them. Use colours.
Active Reading vs. Passive Watching

Reading is controlled by the reader. You are free to skim, read every word, go shallow or deep. Start where you want, stop when you want. A magazine article offers many ways for a reader to approach it. You can glance at the title, the cover picture, and the lead-in text. You could flip through the pages, look at the pictures, read the captions and read some of the highlighted text, and only if you’re drawn in by all this, you can go ahead and read the entire article. If not, you’ve come away with a summary of what it was about, even though you might not know the details. Of course you can go back and read it later. Even when you do read it, you can read a 500 word article in 1 minute, 3 minutes or really soak it in over 10 minutes. The video (moving visuals) and audio medium can be much more powerful because they engage more senses. Could we experiment with these media so that readers can have more control of how, and in what depth they consume their news?

Other Ideas

- Mapping gaps in awareness
- Depict a person’s knowledge of subjects as a city with parts that have been visited often, areas visited occasionally and areas never seen at all.
- Plotting Importance / people affected
- Comparing points of view on maps
- Watching a video or listening to a podcast, you are a receiver without control. The narrator wields control.

Umeå University MFA Interaction Design Thesis
After going over the various ideas that I came up with, I concluded that none of them as an individual product would make a satisfying solution, because they would only be able to touch one or two aspects of the problem. They would not give me the chance to tackle my main issue, which was how to help an individual build a balanced awareness of the world, and perhaps enjoy himself while doing it. Therefore I would have to design a service that encompassed these ideas in its various touchpoints.

At this stage, it was clear that I was designing a platform for people to exchange news - a social network designed solely and explicitly for news. By definition it would be different from Twitter or Facebook which have much wider boundaries for the type of content allowed. (Twitter’s restricts the form of content, but not much else). A great social network is governed by a few simple rules which determine what a user gives to the network and what he or she can gets in return. It was then my challenge to design a solid, yet simple framework for my network.

I also considered and rejected two other directions:

*Data Bibles:* Here I suggested that one cause for misinformation is the lack of free, easy-access data sources for reference and verification. This is even more true in India, for civic, demographic and socio-economic data, which the government has been extremely inefficient at collecting and making available, partly due to the scale of any such undertaking. I thought of designing simple tools for people to contribute to Open Data movements, and tools for them to visualise and draw insights. I rejected this because my interviews and research told me that in journalism, people want to hear critiques and opinions, rather than just be given facts to analyse and infer independently. And if the intention behind presenting pure facts was to be objective, that would not work anyway because it is impossible for any author to escape his own frame of reference.

*Aggregators:* I considered the idea that my news reader might just be an aggregator like Flipboard, which feeds on existing networks to present stories, based on the assumption that all information is out there anyway. In reality most information is behind paywalls. However, neither of these business models is likely to last, and in my opinion neither provides a direct connection between the creators and the consumers, in the way that blogs do.

I laid out the main challenges that I wanted to tackle with my service. From the very start, I had approached this problem from the news consumers side, and I later focused mainly on the consumer’s journey.

**Objectives**

- How to find and present the most relevant/important news?
- How to judge credibility, while being aware of facts and opinions?
- How to form a balanced opinion, while sifting through conflicting claims?
- How to cater to the short attention spans of today’s generation? How to make what is basically a learning activity, more interesting and engaging.
- Also attempt to propose ways for field reporters who do original research to be compensated for their work.

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**Credibility**

- Can I trust it?

**Importance**

- Importance to the world
- Importance to me, my friends, my interests, my location

**Balance**

- Does it represent all points of view?
Experimenting: One Byte of News

To imagine a news social network, I attempted to re-create what would happen in such a service on a small scale.

I began by experimenting what people might tell each other, given the chance to exchange news. I was fortunate to have a very concentrated and diverse sample to study, here at UID and among the alumni network.

I asked everyone to contribute news from their context that they would like to share with the rest of the community.

I defined their context as news related to them, either because it was about their city, country or place they have a connection with, or about a topic that they are interested in and follow.

ONE BYTE OF NEWS

To make it easy to collect and organise the news, I made post-cards for each "Byte" of news, and asked each person to post one "byte" each day. While I did not enforce a word limit, the size of the postcard meant that most people did not write more than 20 to 30 words.
Tell us

a piece of news that you think we should know about. Either because it's important or just plain interesting.

connected to you

in your own voice

Write as if you were speaking to a friend.

any topic

Founded in 1877. A community newspaper.

ONE BYTE
OF
NEWS

I got a newsletter from my architecture school (University of Virginia) and found out that there is a PhD project focusing on landscape architecture in the Alps (which I was really drawn to). I think it was related to renewable energy and sustainable design. Cool! And it's just in time for my thesis...

Tell us about your experience.

Tell us a story.

Tell us your opinion.

Tell us what you think.

Tell us anything.

Tell us why.

Tell us more.

Tell us less.

Tell us anything you want.

Tell us more, please.

Tell us not at all.

Tell us whether you agree or disagree.

Tell us what you think is important.

Tell us what you think is not important.

Tell us what you think is interesting.

Tell us what you think is not interesting.

Tell us what you think is useful.

Tell us what you think is not useful.

Tell us what you think is relevant.

Tell us what you think is not relevant.

Tell us what you think is helpful.

Tell us what you think is not helpful.

Tell us what you think is necessary.

Tell us what you think is not necessary.

Tell us what you think is essential.

Tell us what you think is not essential.

Tell us what you think is important.

Tell us what you think is not important.

Tell us what you think is significant.

Tell us what you think is not significant.

Tell us what you think is urgent.

Tell us what you think is not urgent.

Tell us what you think is timely.

Tell us what you think is not timely.

Tell us what you think is relevant.

Tell us what you think is not relevant.

Tell us what you think is necessary.

Tell us what you think is not necessary.

Tell us what you think is essential.

Tell us what you think is not essential.

Tell us what you think is important.

Tell us what you think is not important.

Tell us what you think is significant.

Tell us what you think is not significant.

Tell us what you think is urgent.

Tell us what you think is not urgent.

Tell us what you think is timely.

Tell us what you think is not timely.

Tell us what you think is relevant.

Tell us what you think is not relevant.

Tell us what you think is necessary.

Tell us what you think is not necessary.

Tell us what you think is essential.

Tell us what you think is not essential.

Tell us what you think is important.

Tell us what you think is not important.

Tell us what you think is significant.

Tell us what you think is not significant.

Tell us what you think is urgent.

Tell us what you think is not urgent.

Tell us what you think is timely.

Tell us what you think is not timely.

Tell us what you think is relevant.

Tell us what you think is not relevant.

Tell us what you think is necessary.

Tell us what you think is not necessary.

Tell us what you think is essential.

Tell us what you think is not essential.

Tell us what you think is important.

Tell us what you think is not important.

Tell us what you think is significant.

Tell us what you think is not significant.

Tell us what you think is urgent.

Tell us what you think is not urgent.

Tell us what you think is timely.

Tell us what you think is not timely.

Tell us what you think is relevant.

Tell us what you think is not relevant.

Tell us what you think is necessary.

Tell us what you think is not necessary.

Tell us what you think is essential.

Tell us what you think is not essential.

Tell us what you think is important.

Tell us what you think is not important.

Tell us what you think is significant.

Tell us what you think is not significant.

Tell us what you think is urgent.

Tell us what you think is not urgent.

Tell us what you think is timely.

Tell us what you think is not timely.

Tell us what you think is relevant.

Tell us what you think is not relevant.

Tell us what you think is necessary.

Tell us what you think is not necessary.

Tell us what you think is essential.

Tell us what you think is not essential.

Tell us what you think is important.

Tell us what you think is not important.

Tell us what you think is significant.

Tell us what you think is not significant.

Tell us what you think is urgent.

Tell us what you think is not urgent.

Tell us what you think is timely.

Tell us what you think is not timely.

Tell us what you think is relevant.

Tell us what you think is not relevant.

Tell us what you think is necessary.

Tell us what you think is not necessary.

Tell us what you think is essential.

Tell us what you think is not essential.

Tell us what you think is important.

Tell us what you think is not important.

Tell us what you think is significant.

Tell us what you think is not significant.
Constructing Narratives

They were tailored by the writer for their audience, in this case their own friends at the design school. The writers assumed a certain level of background knowledge, and probably chose the piece knowing it would interest them. The exercise involved elements of curation and storytelling.

The bytes I collected were short sentence descriptions, or introductions that captured the gist of the story. I went on and researched each contribution, and compiled more snippets of information, wrote them up in the same form, as bytes, in order to build a more complete picture of the story. I pooled these bytes together and tried to build narratives out of the snippets.
I added images to the bytes and highlighted items to separate the quotes from the commentary.

I tried to show branches from one story to others to make biases visible.

I tried methods to highlight “truthiness” or reliability of the data, including starring and flagging.
Tackling my objectives

While laying out these narratives, I tried several ways to highlight each of my three objectives:

Credibility

- **Accountability:** Know who the author of a byte is.
- **Traceability:** Even if a second and third person quotes the author, show breadcrumbs back to the original source.
- Allow the network users to rate everyone’s bytes, find the best way to tag or add metadata describing the accuracy or quality of the bytes. I propose a very simple flagging system using symbols/emoji characters.
- Assign the author with a credibility rating based on the bytes he posts.
- Since stories are just a series of bytes, assign a rating to the entire story.
- Collect people’s feedback on a user and his stories. In my tests, qualitative natural comments like “Funny article” or “Well researched” or “Needs Citation” or “Biased” works better, and are much more expressive and useful than a number rating.

Importance

How do we define importance? An event or news article or byte can be important because it:

- Affects your life directly.
- Affects people who are close to you.

- Affects a large number of people in the world (flood, holiday), or affects a few people in a big way (car crash, lottery)
- Affects the ecosystems that you encounter in your daily living (government, society, country, environment)

A combination of these factors must decide whether a news post climbs to the top of the reader’s newspaper or not.

Importance is inherent in two aspects of this method of presenting news. First, each story is finite. Collaborative filtering is used to highlight which stories rise to the top of the viewer’s news feed. Once again, the news feed must be finite to reinforce the importance accorded to each article in the feed.

Can we show the impact of each story? I propose describing the human impact or economic impact or geographic impact on the title page of each story.

Balance

Carrying forward from “Credibility,” I propose displaying clearly if an article tilts towards a particular point of view. In these sketches, a pie / circle is used to indicate other points of view, and their relative sizes. These must provide links for the reader to branch out in each direction and get a complete picture. Point of view is easily understood from the meta-data of bytes – who liked which articles, who follows which tags.

The aim is never to suppress any points of view, however radical or unconventional they might be. It is to provide opportunities be aware of biases by highlighting them, using the branches as links to balance the story out, or balance it with other stories.
Social News vs. Social Trends

What differentiates news from trends?

The dictionary definition of newsworthiness is simply anything that is of sufficient public interest to require press attention. This definition places no constraints on the nature or content or presentation of news. According to this definition, every trend is newsworthy.

However, some clear boundary lines can be drawn; and for my project news is considered to be a subset of trends. A trending story that meets certain conditions may be called news. For example, a simple condition that filters out a large number of trends — news must document a true event, with evidence. However, that still includes under news everything we call gossip, or tabloid journalism. They can be further filtered by classifying news into categories, not only by the genre but also by whether the information is verifies or is a rumour.

Going deeper though, the lines between news and trends become blurred and newspapers have to fall back to the personal judgement of their editors to decide what is newsworthy, and also to their personal idea of objectivity.

There are several dangers to this. In the Columbia Journalism Review, Brent Cunningham argues how the principle of objectivity makes us passive recipients of news, rather than aggressive analyzers and explainers of it.

We see examples from every type of media house in every corner of the world. To take just one example: In 2003, a student calling newspaper letters-page editors to learn whether reader letters were running for or against the looming war in Iraq, was told by the letters editor at The Tennessean that letters were running 70 percent against the war, but that the editors were trying to run as many prowar letters as possible lest they be accused of bias.

One of journalism’s biggest blind spots is the lack of socioeconomic diversity in the newsroom — not even representing women fairly — according to a survey 2/5ths of newspaper columnists are women but most write on traditionally feminine topics like parenting and health.

Michael Schudson from Columbia University describes in *The Sociology of News* how the boundaries of journalism separating news stories and magazine articles from blogs and tweets is now blurred, along with other boundaries such as the wall between the newsroom and the business office and the line between professionals and amateurs.

While this project cannot conclusively refute the idea that “news” is something different from a “trend”, we can find no examples of “news” that have not passed through the subjective lens of an editor or a curator. The aim of this project is to make a “what if” proposition — what if all the people of the world could collectively curate what is important to each of them individually — what then would news look like?
Italy: 233 Migrants are rescued at sea

From Laura Smith

The migrants, who included women and children, had set off from the North African coast and were not equipped with life jackets.

More than 12,000 illegal migrants were detected off Sicily and 8,000 off Lampedusa in the third quarter of last year.

ITALIAN NAVY

EUROPEAN BORDER AGENCY

BBC COR
RESULTS

Social News – The System

My design solution is a [social] news network based on top of “bytes” - the smallest unit of information exchange - an idea which came up while designing the structure of the workshop/design process, and which I refined further through the prototyping.

Each byte (very much like a tweet) is a piece of news that any individual contributes to the network. Bytes can be collected and grouped into stories by anybody, and anyone can add their own bytes as commentary or editorial to these stories. The network is open and self moderated based on the metadata attached to each byte.

The two diagrams show the difference between the current news industry and the proposed system.

One main difference is that News Gatherers and News Storytellers need no longer be bound to organisations, and often clubbed together (traditionally a news agency + distributor). Now freelancers and amateurs can contribute on equal grounds as professionals.

When an assignment requires compensation, the contributor will be paid for the task of acquiring that information, which will thereafter become free for distribution in the network. There will not be, as there simply cannot be (in my belief), a price on the information itself.
RESULTS

Social News – The Users

Contributors

Contributors can be anyone from a layperson with a phone camera, an eyewitness at the scene of an accident, to a professional journalist doing an investigative story. But who will pay the contributor?

This throws open the door for interesting new business models, which are presented as ideas, but not included in this version of the service.

1. Tips: Great news articles can receive voluntary tips from readers to be shared among the contributors. Writers can also ask for tips after reading. Individual writers could also be rewarded, directly by readers.
2. Stories requiring field research could be funded by organisations that have an interest in that information. For instance, the WWF could fund a photo documentary on Tigers in the Ranthambore.
3. The maps in this design highlight black holes in our awareness - people who desire to study these places could crowdfund a story or documentary.

Curators / Storytellers

It is best to describe curators by describing what the typical persona does today. Today, curators are people who start discussions on the internet. They write blogs, they comment, engage on reddit, run signature campaigns, organise facebook communities and host pages. Their chief motivation is to converse and engage in issues that they care about, and they do so now on several disparate platforms, and sometimes must struggle to have their voices heard by the mainstream.

Curators communicate directly with their audiences. They are able to focus on story telling, and connecting with their audience, which they enjoy, without having to invest in research, data-vetting fact checking. Curators are translators working in two ways - they translate local material for global understanding, or explain global topics to a local audience.

The social news network aims to provide curators with the simplest tools to contribute to this wiki, or public record of events which is owned by everyone. By reducing the barrier of entry to contribute, cite, verify, flag and leave their opinions, I hope to increase the 5% / 95% ratio of internet participation.

Consumers

So far I have described the system independent of the medium used to access it. To choose a medium, I chose a set of personas and scenarios. I roughly divided the Indian population into the 5% and the 95% and according to economic status, the top 5% being the (growing) group that has access to smartphones and internet.

In research I had found that TV and print news in India is targeted at the 5% resulting in an upper class that is woefully unaware of news from the rest of the country. This division might also apply in other contexts, as illustrated by the NY Times and Guardian coverage maps.

Anyway, I chose the Indian 5% as my target users and designed scenarios in which they would use their smart devices to access the news, fitting into the characteristics of their lives and tailored for their attitudes.
Scenario 1

Marie is in the habit of waking early and checking up on the news as she eats breakfast. She sets her iPad on the table and it starts to play the morning news, as has been set up for her. The iPad autoplays through all the stories, byte by byte, with audio and video clips.

Marie doesn't need to touch the iPad while it's playing. If she waves her hand to the left, the currently playing byte is skipped and the next one plays. If she swipes her hand upwards, the entire story is skipped and the next story plays.

On her way home from work, Marie checks the news once again. But since she doesn't like to take her iPad out in the bus, she plays the evening news, which is also compiled according to her preferences. She chooses a 30 minute programme and hits play.

Scenario 2

Jim regularly checks the news during his first morning break at work. He opens up the app and the days stories are waiting for him. He glances very quickly at the bytes in each story and moves on to the next one.

When he gets back home in the evening, he is in the habit of having dinner with his wife, and he turns on the TV to watch the news. The TV is powered either by an Apple TV, and he brings up the app and begins to browse.

This time he lets each story play out fully, then waves over to his bookmarked “Nature” list and starts to browse bytes, waving each story by as he looks for something interesting. He does all this either by waving his hand, or by using the TV remote.
**Scenario 3**

Deviceless Consumption

Ravi, an enterprising young schoolteacher from rural Tamil Nadu, has access to the internet from the primary school he works at.

He logs on to News Bytes and within a minute tailors a custom 4-page news sheet for his village and distributes the copies to his neighbours and friends for a very small fee.

With some issues, a local businessman even offers to run one page of ads in the paper, and Ravi turns a small profit. On those days he gives the paper to the children in his class for free.
RESULTS

Social News – The Touchpoints

The User Interface

- A news sheet has finite length, limited articles, by default configures a 10-minute read.

- Focus location of the maps is choosable, defaults to home - the map keeps the reader aware of news activity around him, and updates with more news when he’s read everything.

- Topics and articles are indicated by dots on the map, either can be used to jump to a location.

- Any updates to the story stream take place live, and the dots also update.

- The news sheet carries stories, important ones first.

- Custom News Sheet can be bookmarked whenever the user searches for something.
Stories in the Newsheet

- title bar collapses to minimal view
- articles being read are checked off
- balance - other points of view are presented alongside
- importance / impact is shown - for example a friends recommendation appears in the bubble
And suddenly it was not whipped cream anymore

Only two of seven brands are real whipped cream, the others use red algae E407 as a thickener.

China successfully tests smog fighting drones

From Hao Yu Li

China declared this week a battle against pollution, and has fortified its war chest with a new weapon - a smog-clearing drone.

“The parafoil plane, connected to a gliding parachute, carries a payload of chemicals that can be sprayed within a 3 km radius.”

SHANXIAN DAO, China Radio

A chemical catalyst freezes the pollutants particles, causing them to fall to the ground. A chemical catalyst freezes the pollutant particles, causing them to fall to the ground.

Fog is so bad in Beijing that sometimes the only way to see the sunrise is on television screens in Tiananmen Square.

In the past, officials often used an arsenal of rockets, artillery and aircraft to disperse chemicals in a technique called “cloud seeding” to create rain and help clear the air.

More 40+ women are now having children

Only two of seven brands are real whipped cream, the others use red algae E407 as a thickener.

• Cred rating, of byte - symbols - (?) and (tick)
• Responses to story - qualitative words, symbols, byte response
• Credibility of story - based on the sum of all bytes and the author of story
• Direct quotations are distinct from author’s commentary
• Author or source of byte

Story - A Stream of Bytes
End of story

The story's end leads to a quick review area where he can choose a qualitative response to the video, from among the list of popular responses.

The user can continue to “LOAD MORE” as long as he likes, he will receive longer stories, and more in depth information like feature stories, interview, documentaries, etc.
Playback mode

Playback mode allows the news stories to play like a recorded programme or bulletin:

- photos pan as a slideshow
- video play automatically
- text is read out
- quotes are spoke in the original recorded voice if available
- play can be interrupted by going deeper into the story or by skipping bytes and stories
- playback can be controlled via touch swipes, or by in the air gestures, detected by the tablet's in-built camera.
Testing and feedback

Through my presentations, examination, discussions, and talks at the Degree Show and Exhibition, I have received a variety of feedback, criticism and thoughts about this project, ranging from enthusiasm to scepticism to challenging questions. I received feedback about the concept as well as the user interface, and I documented here the main themes of the discussions, chiefly relating to the concept.

Rules of the System

The system depends on a certain common agreed definition of what material can be called news and what material will not. It has already been said that while the definition of news can keep changing and evolving, the definition itself is at all times transparent, and the process or method for creating the rules to define news is also transparent. However, is it possible to algorithmically enforce these rules or at least part of these rules so that it does not wholly depend on manual policing by the community?

Manipulation of the System

When there exist rules, there will always be loopholes and people will invent means to exploit them? Is it possible for economically powerful people to turn an open network their favour, in the same way that they are able to engage in the practice of what is called media management? The idea of News Engine Optimization, like Search Engine Optimization, is bound to develop, but will it work mostly in favour of or against the system? Taking it further, the use of sockpuppets — false online identities paid to participate in internet discussions and influence public opinion — in social networks in China (the 50 cent party), Russia (Web brigades) and the USA is known, and how an open network will take up their challenge must be studied.

Misinformation and Perceived Credibility

One of the key rules of this system is that bytes must be cross verified by multiple sources, or must show evidence from multiple sources, whether as photos or video. How would the system safeguard against hoaxes or misinformation, where people fabricate evidence, or try to imitate the organic signature of a news event? It is true that these problems are by no means limited to the system proposed, they have arisen with traditional journalism as well, but while in the latter case the blame for irresponsible reporting would fall on an individual or a single paper or channel, in an open network it would seriously affect the credibility perception of the entire network.

Accountability and Protecting Sources

Both earlier points of authenticity and accountability could theoretically be addressed if all contributors had to necessarily use their real names and identities. But how would the network handle cases where the publicising the identity of the contributor could pose a risk to his safety, such as in cases of scoops, leaks, investigations, and revealing confidential information or simply discussing a controversial topic. Can sources be protected? Can some contributions be made anonymously, and in such cases, how will they be verified?
Risk of Majoritarianism

The network ranks stories based on how people interact with them. It is designed to imitate how stories arouse people’s interest and organically spread to wider and wider audiences. However, it needs to be clearer if there will be any initial ranking or editorial at all. And whether this process of up-voting will ever become recursive and prevent downvoted stories from reaching any audience at all. Since people’s opinions determine the importance, does the network risk becoming majoritarian. How will it maintain and promote diversity, especially in the case of voices/groups/opinions so small that they cannot make an impact unless somehow amplified?

How useful are opinions?

Should the general public opinion on a topic influence an individual’s stance on that topic? Situations arise when public opinion is different from scientific fact or best available knowledge. For example, 37% of US Americans believe that homosexuality is a result of upbringing or environment. A newspaper or media outlet is likely to take a stand on this topic, and come down on one side of the fence or another. Since the open network equally represents everyone, how must it present cases like this where opinion is not in agreement with evidence? Climate change is a similar controversial issue, and there are many many more.
Reflection

When I started this project, the death of the newspaper was well and truly old news. A teenager friend had expressed great astonishment upon learning that newspapers are actually printed afresh every day, and that comment made me realise that in a short time, “news” has c

Yet what truly surprises me is that we have not yet found a replacement for the function that news played in our lives. The function of a curator - who sifts through a lot of information and suggests that these few pieces might interest me. It doesn't matter whether the curator is biased or monopolistic, as has been so often in the past, because you just have somebody to disagree with. Now however, it's a free market for information, and we are spoilt for choice.

By good or bad luck, the time I was doing this project was run up season to India’s parliamentary elections. This is absolute peak season for the “paid news” industry, and working through this period was at the same time extremely exciting, and distracting. My social circles provided me with an observation goldmine of every kind of cognitive bias. There were people who watched the same video clip and came away with completely opposite inferences. There were people throwing accusations at each other; these accusations being challenged loudly, proven and debunked all in the space of hours, and people routinely reacting to disconfirming evidence by strengthening their beliefs. It was definitely as if every body was living in parallel universes, yet sharing the same space, bringing back the old philosophical question that if reality is in the mind of the observer, do facts have any relevance at all?

However I do strongly believe that a common understanding of our shared reality is important to having a successful co-existence, and I think the aim of my project is to create an awareness of that shared reality. Ayse (my classmate) had quite early on in the project remarked that she enjoys looking at other people’s Facebook feeds, because they're so different, and are a reminder of our parallel realities.

The big challenges for me were keeping time, and avoiding getting too lost in research, as I very often do. I have a hard time making myself switch off from research and move on. Every new piece of information distracts me for while but does inform my design.

After the research, the part I enjoyed the most was collecting my One Byte of News cards from my schoolmates to find out what they had to contribute. I regret however that I did not have time to do a second round of collecting news bytes, where I would allow people to question each other and ask for more information from their sources, turning it into a conversation.

The struggle and challenge really was in determining how the service would ensure that my goals of balance, credibility and relevance.

I am happy with my result, I think that it really is worthwhile building a network like I’ve proposed. In fact I am surprised that even today after two and a half decades of the internet, there is no “one place to go to” for the news. I think that if I decide to take my project forward with a team of people, it can be “that one place”.

Jacob Cyriac
Social News


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Jacob Cyriac Social News
Appendix
The Times of India
Corporatization of News

News about:

- THE BOTTOM 95%
- THE MIDDLE 5%
- INDIA’S TOP 1%
Summary of Survey Responses

What time of the day do you usually consume news? Any form of news - TV, print, internet, apps, etc.

- Morning / before work: 15 (33%)
- During the day / while at work: 12 (26%)
- Evening / after work: 6 (13%)
- Throughout the day (constant updates): 12 (26%)
- Other: 1 (2%)

Which print newspapers and TV news channels or programs do you read/watch?

- BBC, CNN, ny times, slate, the Hindu, plus a skim of Google news, times of india, ndtv bangalore mirror bbc Times of India, Alzareera.com, CNN, BBC Hindi browse(ndtv.com watch: times now and ndtv Hitavada times of india Local print newspaper (Fuldaer Zeitung), German TV news channel (Tagesschau/ARD + Heute/ZDF), World wide news on different topics on smartphone (Pulse + Flipboard) Times Of India TV channels via internet but mexican news for world news normally BBC Reforma, but again mexican pages NDTV None NDTV Headlines Today BBC Hindustan Times Mail Today Paper but is mostly prompt through social network None, none,sometimes ndtv, headlines today, only because my husband has switched on that channel. SVD magazinet, Metro, Aljazeera, BBC and Washington post and off-course Addis Admas magazin NDTV, TOI, CNN IBN, but also i keep switching channels in case i find something interesting Times of India New York times Both online ndtv online toi online times now on tv newspaper; toi, delhi times, speaking tree I don't watch TV or newspapers anymore. Indian Express, India today Times of India, The Hindu, TimesNow and IBN7 Entertainment Tv4 Read the free magazines like Totalt Umeå or Umeå Tidningen when eating breakfast (I do it even if I have company) but only when eating dinner alone. Gomorrøn Sverige in the morning, rapport in the evenings(both SVT1 TV programs). Then from time to time I read online magazines like dn.se (more national but a lot of focus at the stockholm area) or vk.se (more local news) Hindustan Times, NDTV 24*7 All online - BBC, Flipboard (organized my news there), local weather channels The Hindu, BBC and CNN IBN The Hindu New York Times NDTV 24*7 Online videos and articles

How much time do you spend reading print newspapers?
I don't read a print newspaper  
13  
39%

less than 30 minutes a day  
11  
33%

more than 30 minutes a day  
2  
6%

a few times a week  
4  
12%

Other  
3  
9%

How often do you watch the news on TV?  

less than 30 minutes per day  
8  
24%

more than 30 minutes per day  
4  
12%

A few times a week  
11  
33%

Other  
10  
30%

What websites or apps have you used to follow news? Name your top few sources.

I have used Google RSS reader. You know the story. I use feedly now. TOI, NDTV, Flipboard, NDTV, Flipboard, FastCoDesign, Google News, Google news Design observer, aljazeera, times, the telegraph, the Huffington post Pulse, Flipboard, Google news, Times of India, The hindu, News Laundry I don’t follow but if I need to refer then TOI FB, Aftonbladet, Flipboard, dn.se and vk.se. Google news, BBC, Flipboard, National The Hindu NDTV TOI Int. NY times The atlantic BBC various others Google news, quartz, New York times, gizmodo NDTV, IBNlive Guardian fl.com. ndtv The New York Times, CNN, BBC times of India ndtv bbc NYTimes, NDTV, Yahoo News Digest, Paper, Google News ndtv Fastcodesign tech crunch Cardesignews.com

How much time do you spend reading the news online or in apps?

- less than 30 minutes a day
  - 12
  - 36%
- more than 30 minutes a day
  - 8
  - 24%
- a few times a week
  - 5
  - 15%
- several times a day
  - 5
  - 15%
- Other
  - 3
  - 9%

What social networks do you use? Name your top 2 or 3.

Instagram, Facebook, Whatsapp FB Facebook Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr facebook Facebook, LinkedIn Facebook and twitter Facebook, Google plus, LinkedIn Facebook, Pinterest Facebook facebook Facebook linkedin pinterest Facebook, What sapp Twitter, Weibo, Facebook Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest Facebook, Twitter Facebook, QQ Facebook, Twitter Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp

How much time do you spend on these networks?

- Less than 30 minutes per day
  - 4
  - 13%
- 30 minutes to 1 hour per day
  - 4
  - 13%
- More than 1 hour per day
  - 2
  - 6%
- I’m connected, I get updates in the background all day
  - 20
  - 63%
- Other
  - 2
  - 6%

What % of the content that you see on this network is news?
Is the news you follow more local (related to your city, country) or more global?

- less than 5% is news
- 5 to 20% is news
- more than 20% is news

Is the news you follow related more to your topics of interest, or more general interest?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
What are your areas of interest (in news)?

- **Politics**: 12% (12)
- **World**: 7% (18)
- **Science and technology**: 11% (20)
- **Economics and Business**: 2% (4)
- **Health and Fitness**: 6% (10)
- **Sports**: 2% (3)
- **News related to my profession**: 8% (13)
- **Other**: 4% (7)

**Where do you live?**

- Bangalore, India
- Eindhoven, the Netherlands
- Leh, India
- Dimapur, Nagaland, India
- New Delhi, India
- Munich, Germany
- Fulda, Germany
- Umeå, Sweden
- Chennai, India
- Bangalore, India
- Stockholm, Sweden
- Sweden
- Los Angeles, USA

That's it, thank you! If you don't mind me asking you a few more questions, please leave your contact here.
Any comments? Anything you want to note that I might have missed? Questions to add? Feedback welcome!

maybe the means of getting the news? mobile/desktop/chatting... even further, I feel that I get different news through different means. For instance, news about friends are from Facebook, news related to my interests are from rss reader... just FYI I don't know what you are looking for exactly... but my batch mate (in masters) she did her entire thesis over how information is presented in news and how ppl consume it, how it gets distorted, how one can find out how authentic the news is... etc. The example she took was by mapping and following story of Malala. And she did a great job out of it. If that helps... you can check her work here... http://monicaalisse.com/index.php/interface/mapping-malala/ :) Good luck This is Jacobs feedback I prefer Al jazeera as it is quiet unbiased. I would to hear more authentic, unbiased and well written news. New on television has become more interactive and its much more beyond just information... Its a lot of discussion and its more realistic now. So thats more interesting and constitutes a big chunk of my evening tv viewership. I and most of my friends were once having a discussion as to why most of us visit ndtv.com for online news... And we all agreed that it was so short and easy to type. We can ski through the headlines and expand and see whichever catches our interest. Also its a lot more visual than regular websites, which is a plus ! On Social network, we do like to see whats happening with our friends and what all they are involved in. It also gives us a platform to broadcast whats happening with us. So we become the news for the rest of the world. We sometimes create events just to be in news. In a way we are advertising ourselves. New remains interesting as its real and not fiction. Good luck with your thesis... I have periods of time when I don't feel that I have followed the local or world news enough... and then periods when I read more then usually like when I have signed up for Dagens Nyheter (DN) for a short period or prescribed to vk.se online version. But after periods that I know I missed a lot of news it would be nice if I could get like a summary of important things that has happened, and the core of it. It can be quite embarrassing if you missed out something important :P The most interesting news do I usually get through FB, since my friends are good at posting a lot of interesting posts from all over the world (so they have like filtered it for me already ). Jacob wake up Good luck Jacob! and if u need further info please dont hesitate to contact me All the best! and kickass! :) Go, go, go, Jacob News relating to crime against women or general crimes makes me nervous, some times i avoid reading them and want to forget them. good luck Jacob :)!!