

Top Trends in Social Media

Best of the XMA
Cross Media Awards 2012



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Research Report Trends in Social Media

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The publishing industry adapts to the challenges of social media

As a jury member for the XMA Cross Media Awards 2012, I have had the highly inspirational and challenging task of picking out the winners among so many great entries. Looking at the winning projects, it is clear how much the publishing industry has truly developed and adapted to our ever-changing digital world in recent years. After going through all 87 projects that were entered this year, I can see a number of patterns and trends driving the success of this industry development, and I'd like to share some of those with you.

The first is the clear focus on social channel synergies in many of the projects. Today's audiences spend most of their online time in social media, where any organization wanting to reach them needs to have a strong and relevant presence. The Guardian's winning Facebook app is such an example, bringing relevant news to their Facebook audience by social curation, rather than trying to direct the audience away from Facebook to read their news.

A second and even more crucial insight is the importance of driving continuous engagement in social channels. Attracting many Facebook page likes or Twitter followers is merely a starting point. True social media success comes only with long-term engagement, and the understanding that one must focus on engagement and activity levels rather than just the size of the fan base. For instance, Le Parisien's clever structure with full-scale editorial teams activating their Facebook presence has helped them build a large Facebook fan base, but even more crucially kept their Talking About This score around an impressive 10%. The way Verdens Gang invited the public to show their support and share their feelings around the July 22 terror attacks, shows a different path to take for true engagement.

The next step beyond offering engaging content to your audience is to invite the audience themselves to create that content and, thus, engage them further through crowdsourcing. Últimas Noticias' impressive initiatives Superbarrio, Tu Voz and Tu Zona are all examples of this, inviting the public to tell the stories of importance to them, while offering training for hundreds of community reporters. Almost equally remarkable is Retter.tv, cleverly turning a workforce of emergency and rescue workers into reporters out in the field.

Turning social media engagement into profit is, to many, the holy grail of this business and also my fourth lesson from the jury's work. Among this year's entries we found a few interesting ways to monetize social media beyond just driving traffic and clicks. A great example is the omy Blog Club, for which Singapore Press Holdings has attracted a database of 3,000 bloggers that they connect to brands in creative ways, monetizing through both ads and more engaging customized blogger collaborations.

The way the publishing industry has embraced social media in recent years, combining channel synergies, audience engagement, crowdsourcing and monetization, is, from what I can see, creating the foundation for the future digital success of this industry. I was excited to see this so clearly embodied by many of the entries this year. And as the social digital lives of audiences are always characterized by change, innovation, and emerging trends – just look at the recent growth of visual social media such as Instagram or Pinterest, social SEO, mobile commerce etc. – I, for one, hope the publishing industry will keep evolving just as fast.



Nils von Heijne

Creative Director, Pronto Communication
Representative of the 2012 XMA Cross Media Awards jury

Best community engagement

Forming closer ties with the community has become an essential mission for news organisations, particularly at a local level, but also nationally. All the winners in the best community engagement category have undertaken initiatives that involve readers contributing content, and hence becoming a more significant part of their reporting efforts. This reflects the fact that contributing to a publication is seen to immediately increase loyalty, as well as helping the news outlet in question to provide more relevant coverage.

1st prize: Últimas Noticias, Venezuela

The self-described “people’s newspaper,” Última Noticias’ mission is to represent the concerns and desires of the community which is reflected in its project “Superbarrio,” or Superneighbourhood. Launched in 2004, Superbarrio pivots on grass-roots journalism, where journalists meet readers face-to-face in some of the poorest communities to give them a chance to raise awareness of their local problems and to generate content themselves. Superbarrio provides numerous platforms for local communities to voice their concerns. On the print side, there is a dedicated five-page section in the newspaper published four days a week. The section is split into themes: “La Voz del Lector” (The reader’s voice) for complaints, “Lectores en Acción” (Readers in action) where community reporters’ articles are published, “Lectores en la Jugada” (Readers in play) for reports about local sports, and “Echa Tu Cuento” (Tell your story) where readers publish stories. To help citizen reporters with writing their articles, more than 200 workshops were organised to help them develop their skills.

On the digital side, Superbarrio comprises two web portals, “Tu Voz” (Your

voice) and “Tu Zona” (Your area) where users themselves generate content. “Tu Voz” focuses on issues and complaints, and has 27,972 people registered who upload an average of six to seven stories, photos and/or videos each day. The site receives 278 daily visits and its Twitter account has 688 followers so far. The second portal “Tu Zona” focuses on events and activities in the communities. Its Twitter account @tuzonacaracas has 27,778 followers and has become the daily guide to cultural and community activities in the

city, where users post photos and tips on things to do in Caracas.

Similar to those for the printed product, workshops were also organised to help users to understand and use digital technology.

Social media also plays an active role in other areas of “Última Noticias.” The flagship Twitter account @Unoticias has some 388,885 followers and a Facebook page with more than 7,000 fans. Realising that readers may also want more specific content, the paper has launched niche Twitter accounts for sport (@Undeporte), President Chavez’s speeches (@Unchavezdice), and multimedia pieces (@Eje, @PillatelaPropia, @infografiacc).

However, it is the paper’s specialised Twitter account @AIMercadoconUN that stands out, with 8,759 followers so far. Having to visit several different supermarkets in Venezuela just to buy basic food products, this community informs each other of the current supply and on-going



"A truly great setup with three social channels for community reporting and engagement. Securing the people's voice being heard and getting important stories published."

Nils von Heijne

special offers. To make it easier to search for what is or what's not being sold, various Twitter labels were developed: #wherethereare, #yesthereare, #notherearenot. Not only is @AlmercadoUN a public service, it is unique in Venezuela that it provides such a service as well as practical advice on how to make your pennies go further in the supermarket.

When it comes to connecting and engaging with communities, "Superbarrio" is clearly providing a valuable service to its readers by providing multiple platforms on which their voices can be heard.

Key points

- Modern-day grass roots journalism, meeting readers personally and helping them with the tools to create content.
- Providing three channels for readers to contribute content: print, web, social media
- Innovative use of Twitter handle @AlmercadoconUN to offer a practical side to Superbarrio

Key figures at a glance

- No. of Facebook likes 7,000+
- No. of Twitter followers @Unoticias 388,885
- No. of Twitter followers @AlmercadoconUN 8759

2nd prize: Retter.tv, from Mediengruppe Pressedruck, Germany

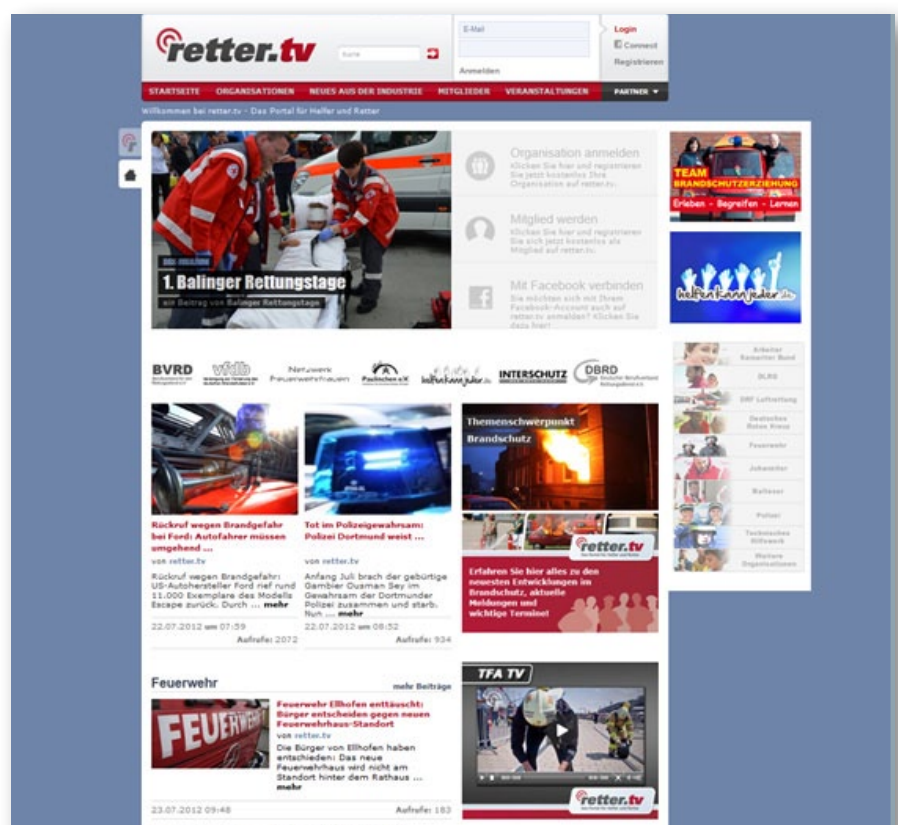
If you've ever wanted to know more about a particular traffic accident in your area, Retter.tv may just have the answer. Mediengruppe Pressedruck's portal "Retter.tv" is the niche professional portal for members or the emergency and rescue services.

The idea for the project emerged when members of the emergency services and rescue organisations expressed concerns that the media often reported only a fraction of what really happened during accidents/incidents that they were involved in. These professionals wanted a

platform to tell their side of the story, as the eyes and ears of traffic accidents, fire, crime and rescue operations. At the same time, conversations within the emergency services industry all pointed toward a need for a communication channel for their professional issues and practical career advice. And so Retter.tv was born.

Retter.tv enables registered users from the major emergency services to upload content online about incidents they were involved in, to exchange information with each other, and to offer support to one another in what is often a highly stressful profession.

Since its launch, 450 organisations have become registered users, with 8,000 individual members posting content.





While this portal primarily serves a professional niche community, the general public has also shown an interest by taking part in heated discussions about news stories on the webpage and on Facebook. Thanks to Retter.tv's steadily growing number of Facebook fans – currently more than 80,000 – and real-time updates on Twitter, content is virally spread through the web, leading to a significant growth in traffic. In 2012, monthly visits have been about 220,000 so far, compared with 90,000 in 2011.

On a wider spectrum, Retter.tv is regarded as a significant media partner by many industry events. Its major coup was being named the official partner of the leading German trade show INTERSCHUTZ, which attracts 125,000 attendees. As official media partner, Retter.tv carried out

cross-media news coverage, "INTERSCHUTZ LIVE," which consisted of a printed trade journal, a web-TV channel and reports of organisations and visitors. All the content was summarised online on a separate landing page: interschutz.retter.tv. Such was the success that Retter.tv is now used by organisations and businesses for targeted advertising campaigns and consumer sales promotions on social media.

Retter.tv's growing success shows that it identified a niche community and fulfilled its need to be heard and supported. This unique community is able to discuss news stories, share advice and support one another.

Key points

- Finding a niche community that had a growing need for an online platform
- Enabling both the professionals and members of the public to discuss news via the social networks
- Expanding business model by providing media services to industry events

Key figures at a glance

- 450 registered organisations, of which 8,000 individual members post content
- 80,000 likes on Facebook, 1,000+ followers on Twitter
- 220,000 monthly visits to the site in 2012 compared to 90,000 in 2011

"A very clever and original idea for community journalism. It is pure genius to activate and engage a specific work force that is often present when the news happens. Impressive!"

Nils von Heijne

3rd prize: Lokalkompass.de, WVV/ORA, Germany

Up until two years ago, WVV/ORA, publisher of 73 free local titles in the Rhine area in Western Germany, had no significant online presence. In March 2010, it took its first step into the digital world by launching "Lokalkompass.de" with the goal of bringing the latest local news to the web and to strengthen relationships with readers by encouraging them to write articles.

To make Lokalkompass.de work, the editorial staff went through an intense training programme which integrated them into the community building process. A new role of central community manager was developed to oversee all topics and deal with any conflicts or legal aspects, while the local community managers acted as an interface between the community and the editorial department. This was particularly important as they did not want to leave communities with just a virtual contact partner at Lokalkompass.de.

To get communities on board, local events branded "Become a citizen reporter" were organised where key stakeholders in the community and the general public were invited to meet the team at "Lokal-

"This is a great example of citizen journalism taken seriously, with a dedicated platform, team and training. Well done!"

Nils von Heijne

kompass.de." Such was the high level of interest among the community that many citizen reporters were directly recruited at these events.

Currently there are 24,000 citizen reporters, compared with 5,600 at the end of 2010. With so many citizen reporters, Lokalkompass.de organises an editorial schedule to manage topics and activities. Since March 2010, nearly 160,000 stories have been published, and Lokalkompass.de estimates that some 100,000 will be published throughout 2012 alone. The articles also attract comments: in 2011, 250,000 reader comments were recorded, showing a significant level of engagement from the local communities. The popularity of the portal is also clear, with an average of 5.5 million monthly page impressions, 650,000 monthly visits and a dwell time of seven minutes on the portal.

Social media also acts as a multiplier effect for reaching new readers. Content from Lokalkompass.de is posted on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest by editorial staff and users, helping to raise the profile of the brand.

The level of interaction on the site is constantly monitored by the editor. The more interaction, the greater the citizen reporters' sense of loyalty towards the portal, and the more it encourages them to read the printed free sheet, the paper believes. To show appreciation for all the work citizen reporters do, Lokalkompass.de selects a "Citizen reporter of the Month" and does a short interview with them, which is published both online and in print.

Zeigen Sie uns Ihre schöne Heimat Niederberg!

BürgerReporter werden, Bilder hochladen und an Ausstellung teilnehmen

Haben Sie schöne Fotos auf dem Desktop oder in der Schublade liegen? Oder planen schon die nächste Foto-Tour durch Niederberg? Dann laden Sie Ihre Bilder auf die Website der Stadt Niederberg. Dort können Sie Ihre Bilder hochladen und an der Ausstellung teilnehmen. Die Fotos werden in der nächsten Ausgabe der Lokalkompass-Ausstellung zu sehen sein.

VON MIRIAM DABTSCH

VELBERT HEILIGENHANS.

„Ich habe viele tolle Fotos in meiner Schublade liegen.“

Frank Kahlert, 47 Jahre alt, ist ein aktiver BürgerReporter in der Stadt Niederberg.

Er hat viele tolle Fotos von der Stadt Niederberg gemacht.

Die Lokalkompass-Ausstellung ist eine tolle Möglichkeit, seine Fotos zu zeigen.

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Matthias Endlich, Geschäftsführer des Gartencenters Dehner in Kamen, hält mit 55 Euro Gutscheine, die er bei der Lokalkompass-Aktion zu gewinnen hat.

Fotoaktion: Alles, was sich im Garten tummelt

Gutscheine im Gesamtwert von 500 Euro vom Gartencenter Dehner zu gewinnen

Die schönsten Tiere und Pflanzen im heimischen Garten sind gefragt. Fotoaktionen sind eine tolle Möglichkeit, die Natur zu fotografieren und zu zeigen. Die Lokalkompass-Aktion ist eine tolle Möglichkeit, seine Fotos zu zeigen.

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lokalkompass.de
Deine Welt von nebenan – die lokale Bürger-Community

Mitteilen, was mich bewegt.

BürgerReporter werden!

Stadt Spiegel

BürgerReporter werden!

Stadt Spiegel

BürgerReporter werden!

Stadt Spiegel

Other commendable entries:

Dewi Magazine, Indonesia

Dewi Magazine, a Jakarta-based fashion and lifestyle magazine, managed to increase its number of Twitter followers from around 2,000 to a striking 31,000 in a week through an innovative community engagement effort.

The magazine launched #dewichat in March 2012, a 60-minute long live chat on Twitter aiming to “bring our readers closer to influential local figures.” The first one was with well-known fashion designer Tex Saverio.

Dewi challenged Saverio’s fanbase to help increase its Twitter followers from 2,000 to 10,000 before he took part in the live chat. A week later, by the day of the chat, the follower count was 16,246 and by the end of that day it was 31,037.

The campaign drew a much wider, previously untapped readership, Dewi said. “Judging from the unprecedented success of this campaign, it became apparent to us that our readers demand more spontaneous & engaging content.”

The magazine plans to keep this initiative going on a monthly basis, and to bring in influential figures from outside the fashion world. Dewi also hopes to expand the project to include questions by video.

Key points

- Twitter followers up from 2,000 to 31,000 in a week
- Live chats with well-known figures are a simple but effective way to attract attention

Irish Times, Ireland

The Irish Times’ Generation Emigration project “makes the world a smaller place for Irish emigrants,” aiming to capture the experiences of the current generation of mobile Irish citizens. Last year, an average of more than 100 Irish people a day left the country in search of new opportunities and the Times wanted to look at the impact of this mass exodus on “their lives, on those they’ve left behind, and on our society for years to come.”

Online, the project hosts a blog that features articles from guest contributors who are emigrants themselves, news for the Irish community abroad, and a discussion forum where readers can debate issues relating to Irish emigration. In print, a weekly newspaper feature highlights a different emigrant experience, often informed by issues raised by readers in the comments section of the blog, the paper said. A version of the print article is also uploaded to the site for readers to comment.



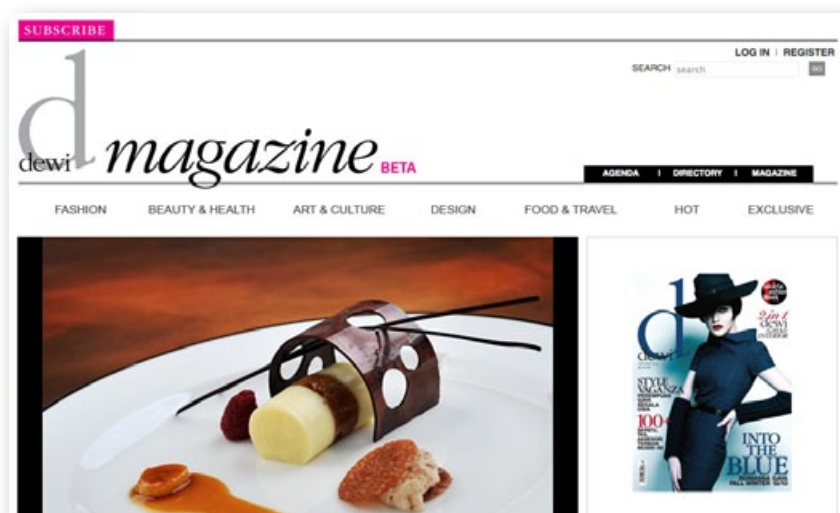
Twitter and Facebook are used to inform followers about relevant new posts and articles in the Generation Emigration area and elsewhere on irishtimes.com, to draw people to the comments section, and to source new stories and interviewees for the blog or for the print features.

Social networks are also used to communicate with individuals and organisations that have links to the Irish abroad, the paper says, - especially Irish immigration centres, sporting organisations, and social and business networks for Irish communities overseas – who can draw the attention of their followers to content on Generation Emigration.

The social media pages have directed readers from 66 countries to the Generation Emigration blog; fewer than a quarter of readers clicking through were based in Ireland. Feedback has been positive, the paper said, with emigrants saying that they had previously felt frustrated at their lack of voice in Ireland, and even more established Irish emigrants who left some time ago appreciate the opportunity to reconnect with Ireland.

Key points

- Targeting a community that is growing rapidly as more people emigrate
- Actively using social media to connect with new readers/participants
- Generating not only interesting coverage in print and online but also offering members of the community a clear service via discussion forums



Best use of Facebook

Facebook is the king among social networks in terms of numbers of users and how much time they spend on it. While Twitter was the first social network to be widely used by news organisations, many are now directing most of their efforts at Mark Zuckerberg's creation and its more than one billion users. It offers interesting branding opportunities, as well as the chance to promote content and directly interact with readers, as the entries below show.

"A brilliant innovation, the Guardian is truly breaking new ground here!"

Anette Novak

1st prize: The Guardian, UK

Having been applauded for its pioneering digital-first approach by the news publishing industry, it was only natural that the Guardian would be quick off the mark to make its content readily available through Facebook. The digital development team at the Guardian worked in close partnership with Facebook to create an app that integrates with Facebook's Open Graph

platform and the Guardian API, to allow Facebook users to read Guardian content without leaving Facebook.

If a Facebook user who has installed the app reads Guardian.co.uk content, this content is automatically shared amongst Facebook users, who can access it within Facebook rather than being directed to The Guardian website. There is no need for input from the paper's editorial team, it surfaces content based solely on social interaction, the paper explained. Of course how much content appears in each Facebook user's news feed also depends on their settings and those of whoever shared it.

Since its launch on 22 September 2011, to accompany the Facebook f8 launch, the app has attracted a global audience with users from 200 countries and has been installed an impressive 14 million times. The app was built from start to finish in just seven weeks in line with

Facebook's "move fast and break things" philosophy. The Guardian team faced a number of challenges during this time, as they had to work with technology that had not only not yet been released, but was also rapidly changing as the Facebook developers continued to work on the underlying platform.

As well as the app being promoted at the F8 conference (although it did not go live until after midnight on launch night), Facebook, Twitter and Guardian.co.uk were also used as promotion channels.

The app has had significant success since its launch. Just three months after launch, the number of visits referred from Facebook to Guardian.co.uk increased by 380% and there are currently 2.5 million people using the app every month.

However, what is remarkable is that the app has attracted an entirely new demographic of users below the age of 24, whose friends who are new to the Guardian are able to see what content they are reading.

The Guardian is constantly looking for ways to improve its app by listening to users and use social media channels to explain how it works and answer any questions. Furthermore, they continuously monitor behavioural patterns of usage and feed this information back to the developers. As a result, there have been a number of improvements such as the inclusion of picture galleries and video, which has





community management. Through a substantial promotional campaign to reach existing and potential readers on all media channels - print, web, TV – 24sata generated more than 400,000 fans. Since April 2012, management of the page has returned in-house and the results have improved further with a current total of 500,000 fans who help generate 10-12% of traffic to the website. The Facebook fans themselves represent 17% of all unique users on 24sata.hr, according to Google Analytics.

An in-house analysis of Facebook content helped 24sata identify the two principles by which to decide on what to post on their Facebook page: articles which are of interest to Facebook fans and articles which 24sata considers to be important. While the latter may not necessarily receive the most clicks for 24sata, it is still crucial for their brand that serious content is present on the page. Additionally, special projects are promoted on the page, such as prize-winning games or digital subscriptions, as are other titles from the publishing group. 24sata's Facebook page is essential for building and maintaining quality relationships with fans, the paper says, and a great deal of time is spent informing them, entertaining them and listening to them.

To push its brand and image further, 24sata has developed a number of Facebook apps with the aim of providing fun and engagement to their fans. One such

led to some video going viral and being shared by millions of people.

Lessons learned from the app have also been integrated into the website, such as social sign-in and using Facebook in a more integrated way. An example that the paper gave is a Facebook-based interactive which showed guardiannews.com readers in the US how gay rights varied in different states according to where they and their Facebook friends live.

Such close integration with Facebook is clearly effective at reaching new audiences. And although if people are reading content within the app it means that they might not click through to the Guardian at all, the paper said that the app has opened up "new commercial opportunities" and "are now exploring new and innovative revenue ideas that take full advantage of the Facebook platform."

Key points

- The app requires no additional editorial input, relying entirely on social sharing
- People are reading Guardian content without leaving Facebook
- It is reaching a new demographic of under 24s

Key figures

- 14 million installs of app
- 2.5 million people using app
- Website traffic increased by 380% in the three months post-launch.

2nd prize: 24sata, Croatia

Croatian daily 24sata has come a long way since its launch in 2005. It has the largest circulation in the country with 130,000 copies and the second most visited site, with 3.8 million monthly unique visitors. Its Facebook page is no exception, holding the number one spot in the Croatian media industry in terms of number of fans, some 500,000.

While 24sata's Facebook page was launched four years ago, it was only two years ago that the paper started to give it more attention by outsourcing it to an agency that specialises in Facebook



“Powerful use of Facebook playing to its strengths as a platform and meeting the 24sata’s business objectives”

Seán Clarke

app “24sata slave” (24 hours of fame) was produced primarily to drive traffic to the website. The response to the app was very successful with fans publishing 90,000 articles in a matter of months, resulting in a significant increase in the number of new visits to 24sata.hr.

Behind the scenes, the social media team at 24sata is fully integrated into the newsroom and closely cooperate with both online and offline editors, allowing them to be kept informed of any developments. The team – a community manager and three administrators – are on duty 16 hours a day (2 shifts) to ensure that the Facebook page is fresh.

Key points

- A mix of content, based on importance and interest
- Clear strategies for driving traffic back to website
- Integration of social media team in the newsroom

Key figures

- 500,000 Facebook fans
- 10-12% traffic to website generated from Facebook
- Facebook fans represent 17% of all unique users on 24sata.hr



3rd prize: Le Parisien, France

Le Parisien’s effort to deliver daily news in a way that is understandable to everyone has proved to be a hit. The paper’s presence on Facebook is a natural move to facilitate conversations with its readers who are “the DNA of the brand,” according to Eric Leclerc, Digital Activities Manager. This has resulted in its Facebook page reaching the top spot among newspapers in France, both in terms of “likes” (558,188 in October 2012) and ‘interactions’ (56,973).

The website, which has 8 million unique visitors a month, has also profited from the success of the Facebook page. Within three months of launch, the number of visits referred from Facebook increased by 340%, and each action on social plug-ins on leparisien.fr resulted in nine visits to the Facebook page. A total of 340,000 fans were recruited over two years, bringing Le Parisien’s total number of fans to 500,000.

Launched in 2010, the Facebook page’s main activity is to deliver real-time national and international news through links to articles on the website, wide photo-coverage and surveys. To help push readers towards the newspaper, each day a post reveals the next day’s cover page as well as highlights of other stories with the relevant links. Facebook’s timeline has also made it possible for Le Parisien to post its archived cover pages going back to 1947, which allows for greater brand awareness

among audiences that perhaps are new to Le Parisien.

In terms of engaging with readers, appropriate content is chosen for Le Parisien’s Facebook page that the team believes will encourage them to interact with the content and with each other. Each post on average generates around 300 comments and up to 3,000 “likes,” indicating that promoted content is relevant to the audience. Games and contests are also an important feature on the page, such as a daily news quiz composed of headlines and illustrations, with the audience having to guess which go together, and the winner receiving a free subscription to the digital newspaper.

There is good level of integration between Facebook and the newsroom, as each section is involved in page management

“Truly interactive, while focussing on core news values. A great complement to the publication’s reporting.”

Seán Clarke

Other commendable entries

and posting stories related to their section. Each post refers directly back to the website and every page on the website delivers a contextual and social description of the content through the social reader. This allows people to see what their friends have commented on and what they choose to read and share (depending on how they have programmed their settings).

Facebook also allows the website to show the articles the “most recommended” and the “most popular” among friends which gives a real-time preview of topics that people are interested in.

Key points

- Carefully chosen content to produce high numbers of “likes” and interaction
- Evidence of a structured social media strategy
- All sections of the newsroom involved in page management

Key figures

- October 2012: 558,188 “likes,” 56,973 “talking about this”
- 340 % increase in traffic from Facebook to leparisien.fr within first three months of launch.
- Social plugins result in average of 9% visits to Facebook page.

The Economist, UK

The Economist has a thriving social media presence, and now has more than 1 million fans on its Facebook page. The page is “primarily a tool to allow readers to sample, engage with and recommend our content,” the paper said, which helps to build stronger relationships with readers.

All links posted on the page’s Wall are freed for users, and include both print and web content. Posts are “manually crafted” and offer an overview of the article in a way that seeks to compel the user to share, comment or click.

Facebook fans of the Economist can also see the cover of the new weekly edition four hours before it is officially released, and they often receive free or exclusive access to Economist events and conferences around the world, the paper said.

There are also periodic hour-long Q&A forums with an Economist editor where users can post questions via the Facebook page.

Key points

- Reached 1 million fans, particularly impressive for a paper which is not traditionally associated with the key social media generations, and which has a paywall
- Manually crafts all posts for better engagement
- Special extras for Facebook fans

The Wall Street Journal, US

The Wall Street Journal chose to cover Facebook’s initial public offering in an unusual but relevant way: on Facebook.

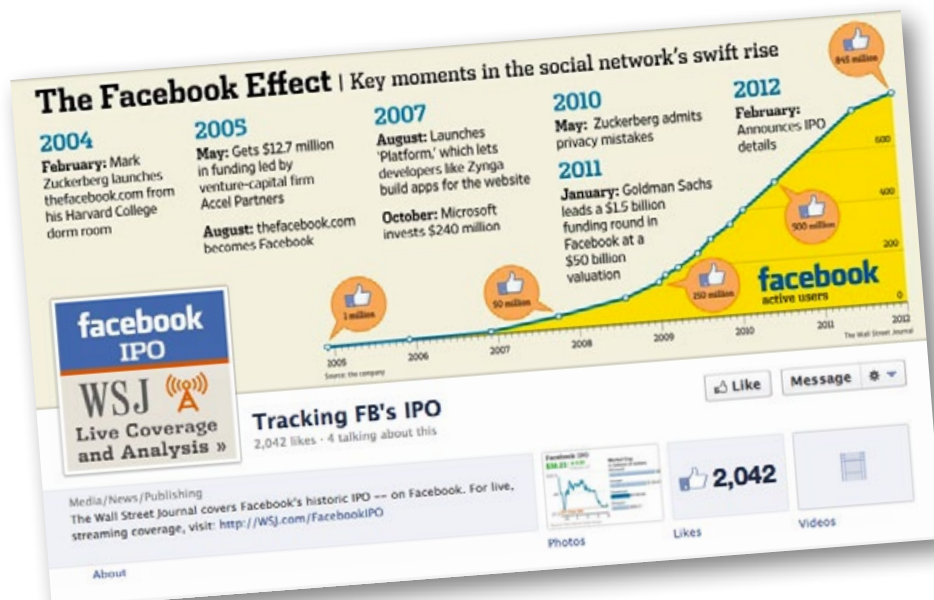
The paper’s social media team created a Facebook page called “Tracking Facebook IPO” under the URL www.facebook.com/GoesPublic which they updated in the days leading up and following the IPO. They offered links to articles, graphics and videos, so that their followers could easily keep informed.

Editors also used Facebook’s Timeline feature to highlight ‘milestones’ in the company history, starting in 2004 when the social network launched. It includes articles from the Journal’s archives, such as the first Page One story mentioning Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook’s founder.

The page reached just over 2000 fans and attracted praise from media commentators, Raju Narisetti, managing editor of the WSJ Digital Network pointed out.

Key points

- Using Facebook to cover Facebook has smart novelty factor, particularly for a primarily financial paper
- Timeline provides a suitable platform for covering a complex story with many stages



Special projects

Social media and the opportunities to communicate with readers more directly in the form of a dialogue have inspired news organisations to embark on some fascinating projects that cover stories in new ways, with help from their audiences. The projects described below have all succeeded in covering issues that their readers really care about and have effectively tapped into the strength of this enthusiasm.

1st prize: Verdens Gang, Norway

Norwegian news outlet Verdens Gang launched four different projects around the 22 July 2011 terror attacks in Norway to connect with readers, combining social engagement with traditional reporting and interactive storytelling.

"Using social media and different kinds of reader involvement not only helped us in our reporting, but helped us cope with working in an extreme news situation and under extreme work conditions," said Espen Egil Hansen, VG's digital editor.

The projects were:

1. This is how we remember our loved ones

VG produced a separate paper supplement in memory of all the victims, with contri-

butions from friends and families. It also provided online tributes where anybody could leave comments.

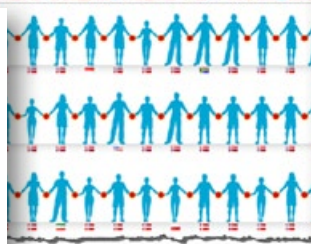
2. The 24 hours that changed Norway – 29 July

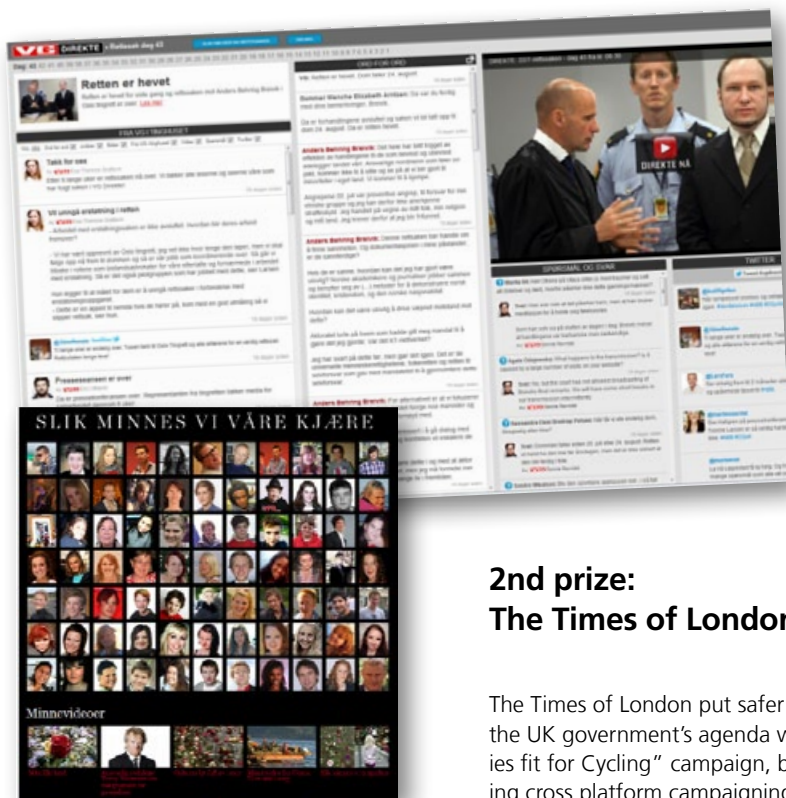
The paper wanted to tell the story of that day in a way that had not been done before, chronologically and using new sources who could provide new perspectives. These sources included "a woman who got married in Oslo's City Hall right before the bomb exploded, a deliveryman whose car accident delayed Breivik, and the policeman who arrested Breivik," the paper said.

A continuous chronological story was published in the print edition, but online the individual stories were collected in a big interactive graphic. Readers could share their own stories in comment sections under the graphic.

3. Join hands

"After the terror attack we saw social media overflowing with sympathy and compassion. People had a need to stand together and show their disgust for the violence," VG said. The "Join hands" campaign was a quick and straightforward response to this – it allowed people to symbolically join hands by signing up on-





2nd prize: The Times of London, UK

The Times of London put safer cycling on the UK government's agenda with its "Cities fit for Cycling" campaign, by "harnessing cross platform campaigning in an age in which newspapers have yet to grasp the power of social media," the paper says. The campaign was prompted by the injury of a young reporter who was seriously injured while cycling to work.

The key to the campaign was to integrate social media with both the print and tablet editions, the paper said, using channels such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram to "create awareness about the issue of cycle safety and to canvass support for our manifesto."

The paper gathered readers' stories and fed that content back into the print, mobile and tablet editions, generating stories worthy of the front page.

An online app shows all the readers' stories, which have been "read by Times journalists to ensure there are no breaches of the law or good taste. But otherwise they have not been changed and appear as you have written them," the website says.

For example, the paper produced a crowd-sourced map where more than 10,000 users pinpointed the exact cycling danger point that they would like to see fixed, and that fed into a double page spread in the paper. It is also data that allows The Times to work directly with local authorities to improve the state of cycling in the UK.

It was the combination of the social media/UGC efforts with the professional reporting in both print and digital products that brought support for the campaign from across the web and traditional UK news outlets, the paper said.

The Times is usually behind a hard paywall but for this campaign, it used a "public" page which is accessible to all. It is a notable way for the paper to remain part of the wider public debate, which is generally so much harder when behind a paywall.

Six weeks after the start of the campaign in February, an inquiry into cycle safety was held in the House of Commons Transport Committee, and the Department of Transport committed to devising a national plan to encourage safer cycling.

line. For each person who "joined hands," a figure representing them was added to a chain in a graphic that was displayed on the website.

1.4 million people ended up "joining hands" – and for the first six hours, 20,000 posts an hour were submitted. It was translated into 11 languages.

4. Live coverage of the court case

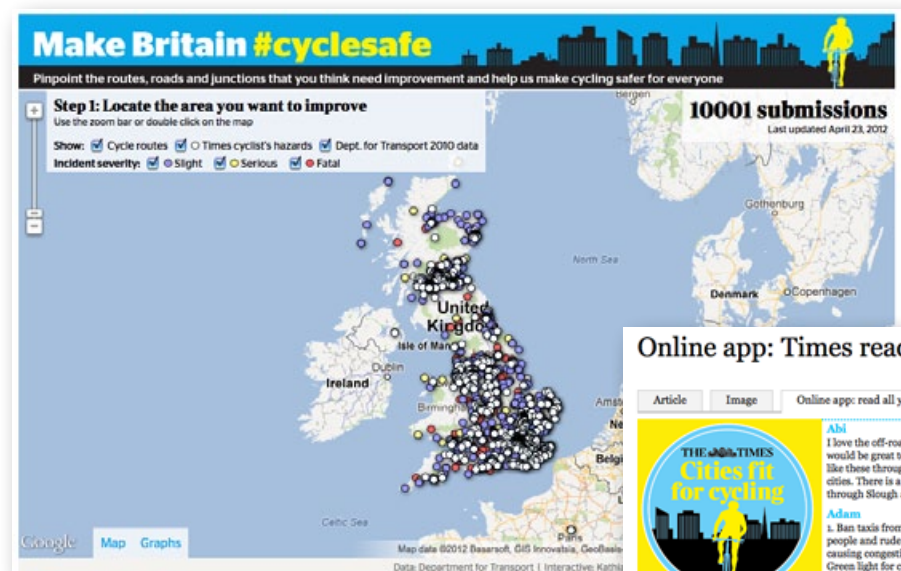
This combined observations from VG's journalist in the courtroom where Breivik was tried, word-by-word coverage, 200 hours of live TV with an edited Twitter feed, and journalists answering live questions from readers.

Key points

Fast reaction time to breaking news
Always involving print in social
Bringing the community together around an issue that affected so many

Key figures

- 1.4 million people participated in "Join hands," with a peak of 29 people per second signing up
- 200 hours of live TV from the courtroom



Online app: Times readers' cycle

Article Image Online app: read all your cycle stories here

THE TIMES Cities fit for cycling

I love the off-road cycle paths. It would be great to see more routes like these through London and other cities. There is a section of this through Slough along the A4.

Adam

1. Ban taxis from bus lanes. Lazy rich people and rude aggressive drivers causing congestion and pollution. 2. Green light for cycles at busy junctions for a few seconds before other vehicles. 3. Proper cycle lanes, not full of parked cars, bus stops etc. 4. Enforce advance stop lines

adam

Just too many to note. Appalling driving by British drivers.

Search for your stories
A B C D E F
G H I J K L
M N O P R

"Fantastic combination of curating, data, social media and community engagement. Crowdsourcing at the heart of the media company at its very best!"

Anette Novak

Key points

- The campaign provoked parliamentary debate and therefore the opportunity to create real change by attracting attention on social media
- An effective combination of platforms and professional/amateur
- The online presence of the campaign was outside the paywall for more impact and more contributions

Key figures

- 35,000 people pledged their support for the campaign
- 7,000 contributed stories about their experiences of cycling
- 3,500 emailed their member of parliament from the paper's campaign page
- 40,000 tweeted with the #cyclesafe hashtag
- 10,001 people added notes to a crowd-sourced map



3rd prize: Aftonbladet, Sweden

SkapaTV, or CreateTV in English, allows people to easily create their own TV shows with clips from popular music artists. It is a collaboration between Sweden's largest media outlet Aftonbladet and Rockbjörnen, a rock music contest, whose winners are selected by the public.

Targeting 15-29 year-olds, who are an age group that Aftonbladet believes to be interested in building their own personal brands, the project aims to let them express their identity through music. The platform, which looks like a mix between the Aftonbladet TV site and YouTube,

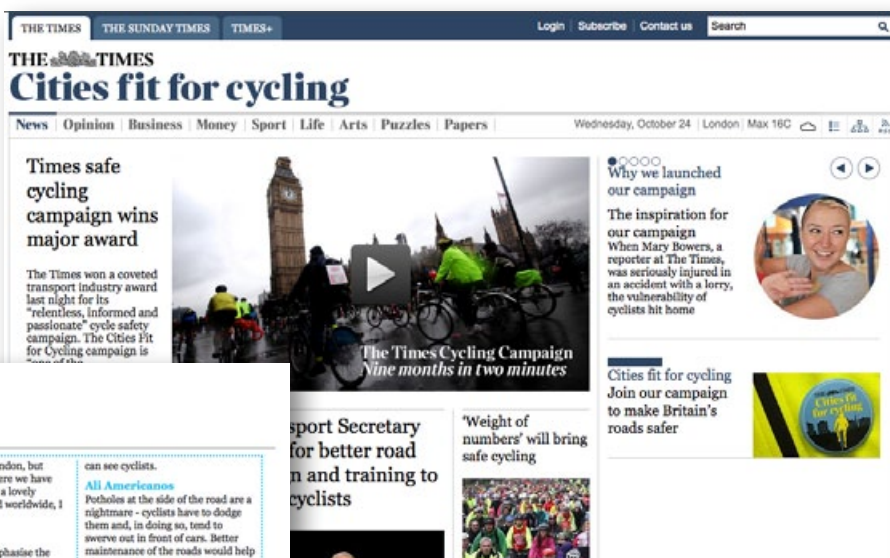
"A strong concept attracting a target group enjoying music and getting recognition among their peers. A simple idea that truly drives engagement and social sharing."

Nils von Heijne

allows them to connect through Facebook and then build their own "show" using clips from artists who have been nominated for awards. Clips from different artists were released each week throughout the summer, to encourage users to create more episodes.

They name their piece, and the snippets they have chosen are rendered into a video together with Rockbjörnen TV opening and end credits, which include the creator's name. There is a vote area on the video page.

Once they have created their video, it is given a unique URL for easy sharing, and there are buttons for direct sharing to social networks. If a user is logged into Facebook they can comment on other videos, and there is a feature that allows them to click on an emotion rather than



stories

most of my days in London, but Michigan is Home where we have such like lanes. Quite a lovely solution should spread worldwide, I think.

Albert [@albert](#)

Please can we also emphasise the importance of wearing reflective clothing and a front & rear light during darkness. In London it seems more than 50% of cyclists neglect to do so or have lights running on low batteries. It should be mandatory and cyclists should be fined for failing to do so. This will only make cycling safer.

Alex

Chapeau to the Times for making

can see cyclists.

Alli Americanos

Potholes at the side of the road are a nightmare - cyclists have to dodge them and, in doing so, tend to swerve out in front of cars. Better maintenance of the roads would help cyclists and motorists alike.

Alison Attwood [@alisonattwood](#)

Although I am in my late fifties I am a novice cyclist having lived as a child in central London and never learnt to ride. Now living in Eastbourne, I have started to cycle and, whilst still very wussy about traffic, I enjoy the quiet and pretty country lanes. Eastbourne has one of the most beautiful seafronts yet it is

port Secretary
for better road
n and training to
cyclists

'Weight of
numbers' will bring
safe cycling





Other commendable entry

Rhein Zeitung, Germany

Rhein Zeitung uses popular photo-sharing application Instagram to gather photos of the Rhine area, which are then displayed on a dedicated website, Rheinstagram.de.

Over three months, the paper saw more than 4,000 pictures tagged with the hashtag it allocated, #rheinstagram. It also uses the hashtag #igerskoblenz, ('igers' being an abbreviation for 'instagramers') where there are now more than 100,000 pictures.

There are far more pictures than staff could produce alone, the paper said, and readers like to see their work displayed.

"What's most important," Rhein Zeitung says, is that the paper has a new supply of photos to use and some of the pictures have become stories, in the print paper or online.

Key points

- Instagram is a newer social network that is as yet less used by news organisations
- As it is less structured, it has fewer obvious uses, but users are very passionate and it makes sense to tap into that

leave a comment: LOL, Applaud, or Goose bumps.

Premium members of Aftonbladet, which operates a freemium model on its website, get access to additional clips for their videos.

The goal for Aftonbladet is brand building, and to strengthen ties with the target group by engaging them in this way. It also provides an opportunity to involve readers in competitions as well as to build relationships with the industry, with the aim of accessing exclusive interviews for the entertainment section throughout the year

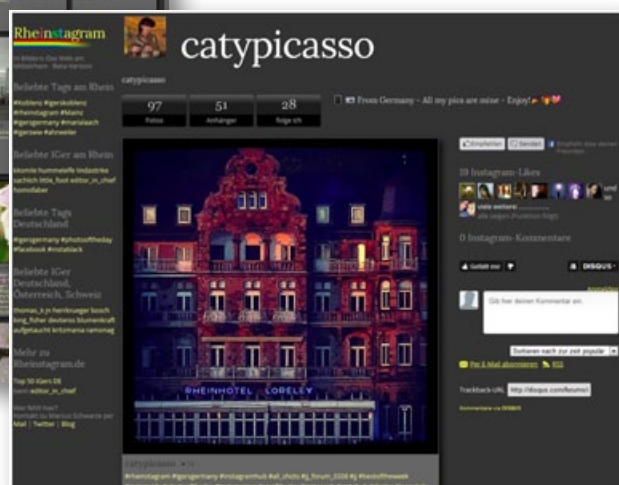
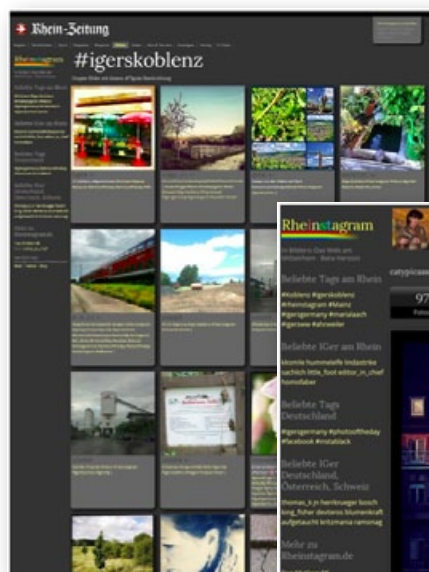
Results have been promising so far, with an increase in the percentage of male voters – 22% up from 5% last year – and mobile votes increased to 25% from 5% last year.

Key points

- Appealing to young people who Aftonbladet believes like entertainment news, music and celebrities, and who are willing to participate and vote
- A way to build more long-lasting attention around an event

Key figures

- Male voters (a particular target) make up 22% up from 5% last year
- Mobile voters make up 25% up from 5% last year
- Aftonbladet's total reach is 2.5m individuals a day



Monetization

There were only three entries in the monetization category this year, which is likely to reflect the fact that many news organisations have not yet found effective ways to monetize their social media and community efforts directly, apart from the benefit of more traffic. It is, however, an important issue for any publication pursuing an active social media strategy and therefore the projects below might be useful for ideas.

1st prize: omy Blog Club

The omy Blog Club is run by omy.sg, a bilingual (Chinese and English) web portal in Singapore under the Singapore Press Holdings media group. Omy.sg features local news, Asian entertainment news, blogs and uses social media content. It was launched in September 2007 and now receives an average of 10 million page views a month and more than 550,000 unique visitors (in a country with a population of 4.8 million.)

The omy Blog Club has a membership of 3,000 bloggers, mostly from Singapore and the bloggers cover a wide range of topics from tech to fashion to parenting, the company said. It was set up in 2010 from a database of bloggers for omy.sg who were all "online opinion leaders."

The immediate key objective was monetizing this community to create a new revenue stream.

Omy matches bloggers with sponsors/advertisers, offering the latter the chance to recruit bloggers to attend events or review products, and then giving additional editorial exposure to these blog reviews. Sponsors can also launch contests among bloggers.

50% of omy.sg's revenue now comes from blogging and social media campaigns, 20% from advertorials and 30% from display ads. Hyper-local community engagement via the omy Blog Club is a key strength that omy.sg leverages as a unique selling proposition, omy said.



"This is a very clever setup for blogger monetization, with the company supplying brands with valuable blogger relationships, while keeping from losing credibility by paying bloggers to post about the brands. The immense growth in earnings proves that the concept truly works and that all parties (the company, the clients, and the bloggers) are winners in the partnership."

Nils von Heijne

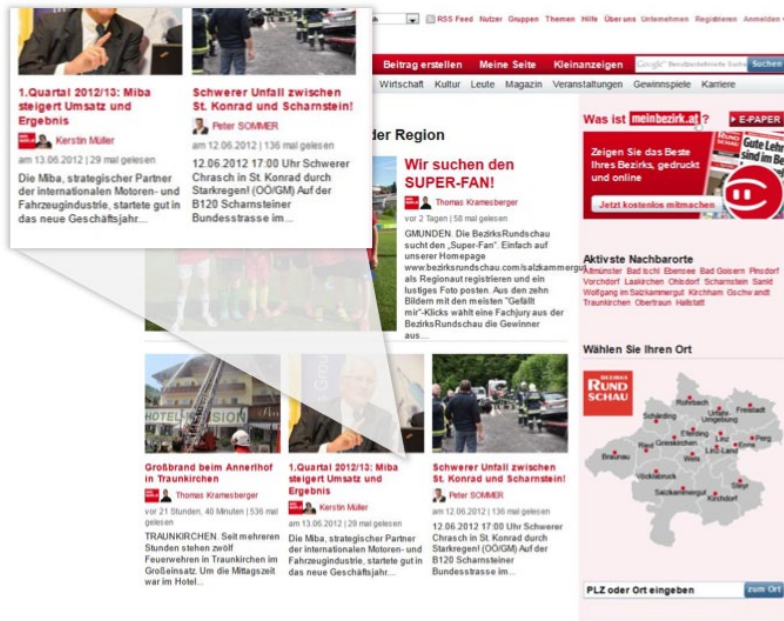
Key points

- As noted in the judge's quote below, by matching bloggers with brands, omy avoids losing credibility by writing paid-for content itself
- The initiative has led to a dramatic shift in the revenue split

Key figures

- 3,000 bloggers in the omy Blog Club
- 50% of omy.sg's revenue now comes from blogging and social media campaigns
- omy.sg has more than half a million visitors a month in a country with 4.8m people





the chance to participate and see their photos used, and the paper brought in a five-figure turnover from the double-page spreads and online advertising banners, as well as an increase in online visitors and therefore potentially more advertisers.

RMA has an established tradition of UGC, with a national network of 129 weekly newspapers and online portals that focus on local content meinBezirk.at and Woche.at. Some articles by "reader-reporters" are published in the print editions with the contributor's byline. An important principle of RMA's UGC strategy is that content from contributors, or regionauts, is put on an equal footing with professional content. "In a print edition, regionauts' contributions are not thrown in a 'ghetto' but assigned to appropriate sections throughout the issue." Therefore their content is on par with the editors' articles, although these are marked to distinguish them.

Key points

- User participation leads to increased engagement as well as the potential for monetization
- Involvement of the print product was key even though the contest was online

Key figures

- 1,500 photos submitted, with 6,500 likes
- 5-figure turnover for Bezirksblätter Tirol

2nd prize: Regionalmedien Austria, Austria

Bezirksblätter Tirol, a paper owned by RMA, launched a photo competition on behalf of an advertiser, Agrarmarketing Tirol, which brought in a five-figure turnover for the paper. The competition, advertised both in print and online, invited readers to upload photos on specific topics to the paper's portal meinBezirk.at.

The competition topic changed each month for six months, and three winners were selected per topic and per region based on the most "Likes." Each month's winners were congratulated in a double-page spread in the print paper.

Over six months, more than 1,500 photos were submitted and 6,500 'Likes' were

awarded from readers, as well as "numerous" comments and discussions.

The categories were:

- Quality Tyrol
- Hay harvest
- Alpine summer resort
- Tyrol harvest festival
- Animal husbandry
- Schnapps as Tyrol's specialty
- Traditional Christmas cuisine and customs

The result was a "win-win-win situation," RMA said, as the customer was able to use the photos and save money on buying them, the readers were happy to have



3rd prize: Straits Times, Singapore

The Straits Times collaborated with Singapore Airlines to promote the airline's A380 planes and a new route, New York – Frankfurt, via a “Big Story” initiative.

Big Stories are The Straits Times' in-depth studies, and this one has its own microsite with all the stories and information inside, such as travel pieces on destinations that the A380 serves, stories on the experiences of the crew, and videos about the plane itself. The site has clear branding from Singapore Airlines, with advertising units employed on the news rotator, fixed contest tile, leaderboard and mobile ads.

The Straits Times also held a contest as part of the deal, the prizes being two sets of business class tickets. It was promoted on the site and via social media. There were 450,000 entries to the competition, and almost 160,000 unique visitors. Singapore Airlines had set a target of 20,000 entries, so they were pleased with these numbers and signed two more “campaign slots” with the paper.

The Straits Times has embraced social media, with more than 150,000 followers on Twitter and 55,000 “Likes” on Facebook. “Our top referral of traffic is no longer Google – Facebook has overtaken the search engine to become our number one source of upstream traffic,” The Straits Times says.

The paper employs a «across four-online platforms at once» policy when it comes to breaking news. As it explains, when a big news story breaks, a line or two is sent via SMS to subscribers, published on straitstimes.com, and posted on Facebook and Twitter. When a story with more details is ready and refreshed on the website, the URL link is promoted again as another post on Facebook and Twitter.

Key figures

- 450,000 contest entrants
- 160,000 unique visitors



XMA 2012 jury members



Seán Clarke, Guardian Media Group, Executive Producer, UK



Olivia Ma, YouTube News Manager, USA



Nils von Heijne, Pronto Communication, Agency Director, Sweden



Regina McCombs, Faculty for Virtual Teaching and Multimedia, The Poynter Institute for Media Studies, USA



Michael Heipel, Executive Director Marketing and Event Management, WAN-IFRA



Anette Novak, WEF Board Member, Sweden



Holger Kinsky, BDZV, Referent Multimedia, Germany



Michael Stoll, Trainer in Social Media Topics, Society for News Design, Germany

List of participating companies

Several companies entered different projects in different contests

24sata, Croatia
 Aftonbladet Hierta, Sweden
 Al Nisr Publishing, United Arab Emirates
 Al Yamamah Press Establishment, Saudi Arabia
 Asahi Shimbun, Japan
 Axel Springer Verlag, Germany
 BBV Mediengruppe, Germany
 Berlingske Media, Denmark
 Brune-Mettcker, Germany
 Casa Editorial El Tiempo, Colombia
 Dow Jones & Company Inc, USA
 El Día, Puerto Rico
 Guardian News & Media, UK
 J. Esslinger, Germany
 La Nación, Argentina
 Le Parisien Libéré, France
 Lensing Medien, Germany
 Lokmat Media, India
 Madsack Heimatzeitungen, Germany
 Mittelrhein-Verlag, Germany
 New Zealand Herald, New Zealand
 Presse Druck, Germany
 PT Gaya Favorit Press, Indonesia
 Rajasthan Patrika Private, India
 RBS – Zero Hora Editora Jornalística, Brazil
 Regionalmedien Austria, Austria
 RIA Novosti – Russian News & Information Agency, Russia
 Ringier, Switzerland
 Röhm Verlag & Medien, Germany
 RP Online, Germany
 Saarländische Wochenblatt Verlagsgesellschaft, Germany
 Singapore Press Holdings, Singapore
 Stuttgarter Zeitung Verlagsgesellschaft, Germany
 The Economist Newspaper, UK
 The Irish Times, Ireland
 The New Straits Times Press, Malaysia
 Times Newspapers, UK
 Últimas Noticias, Venezuela
 Verdens Gang, Norway
 Volksfreund Druckerei Nikolaus Koch, Germany
 Westdeutsche Verlags- und Werbegesellschaft, Germany
 Yedioth Communication Press (2000), Israel

