

BEST PRACTICE IN DIGITAL MEDIA

Profiles of the 2015 World Digital Media Award winners



IMPRINT

**BEST-PRACTICE IN DIGITAL MEDIA:
PROFILES OF THE WORLD DIGITAL MEDIA
AWARDS 2015 WINNERS**

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WAN-IFRA
Rotfeder-Ring 11
60327 Frankfurt, Germany

CEO:

Vincent Peyrègne

DIRECTOR OF INSIGHTS:

Dean Roper

AUTHOR:

Steve Shipline

EDITING:

Brian Veseling

DESIGN/LAYOUT:

Christian Pradel

CONTACT INFO:

dean.roper@wan-ifra.org
+49.69.2400 630

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DIGITAL MEDIA

Europe2016

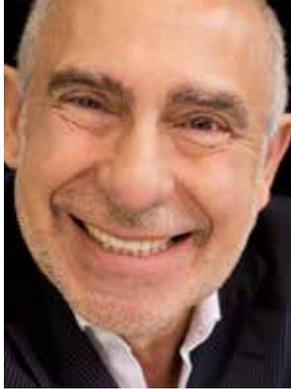
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A DESIRE TO EXPERIMENT AND THE COURAGE TO DO IT

Foreword by Mario García

The winners in the 2015 WAN-IFRA World Digital Media Awards share a trait: a desire to experiment, and the courage to do it. At a time when our industry is undergoing what is perhaps its most profound transformation ever, experimenting is key to find solutions, to create new products and to attract and to retain audiences.

Reviewing the work of these winners proves that 2015 was a year of major transformation for how we present information across platforms, how we engage readers and how we take storytelling to the next highest level.

In fact, these winners have already said Mobile First with their new projects and products.

That they have accomplished this while enhancing and extending their powerful brands is another reason to congratulate them. Let's take a look at the winners and analyse why they stand out.

The Guardian's website, with its responsive design, was not just a favourite among the judges but also with subscribers across three continents. Its success is deeply rooted in robust storytelling, including its award winning investigative reporting and interactive documentaries. The Guardian offers a textbook case of how to tell stories effectively through various platforms, supported with video and graphics that are centered on data visualisation

Digital journalism is all about involving the audience and that is exactly what we see with Austria's Kurier in the Best Innovation category. The Kurier scored big with

a unique campaign that included social media to create awareness for the support of women and education. The result? Nine million contacts via the Kurier Network.

Readers want to get engaged with their mobile products and with its content. That was the goal of Argentina's Clarín which, like smart media firms globally, knows the importance of timing – when certain content is posted. Clarín's team is aware that at 18:00 hours many women users are interested in what to prepare for dinner, which is why recipes tend to appear at that time. Likewise, business people start their day early and Clarín reports what the top business stories are and how the markets have performed in Asia. The results are worthy of this win: positive reaction, more time spent on Clarín's various digital offerings, and a decrease in the number of those who spent little time perusing the offerings of the Clarín Ecosystem.

Audiences can never get enough of the type of stories that present data, especially about topics that touch them directly. The Best Data Visualization Project winner, the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NKR), undertook a project that may have seemed remote and challenging to many: to examine every murder over a 10-year period to see if there was a common theme. The findings: half of all murders were committed by people with a serious psychiatric illness and over half of these were under the influence of drugs when they killed. But NKR's team did not limit itself to numbers. It also told the story from the point of view of the families concerned, adding a new dimension to the project. Digital storytelling at its best.

The team of German's Welt Kompakt knows the meaning of Mobile First, which is why it deserved to be the winner for Best Mobile Service. Kompakt experimented successfully with a product that is 100 percent driven by what we know about mobile users and their preferences: stories are short and presented through those visually appealing cards with headlines that seduce. And because mobile users like to engage with content, the Welt Kompakt mobile project allows for an effective and quick way to provide comments.

The folks at Aftenposten, Norway, are among the most innovative teams in any newsroom. That is why I am not surprised that they are the Best in Tablet Publishing, which also wins in the money department as it allowed for Aftenposten to go from free to a paid-system model. A highlight of this rich tablet edition is the publication of a PDF version of the next day's newspaper, to be consumed in the tablet, and with certain enhancements so that readers don't simply turn the pages. Like all good tablet editions, this one allows the user to lean forward with news and to lean back with more in-depth and entertaining fare.

Best New Product winner, Minmote.no, is all about "my fashion, my style," and it has quickly become Norway's leading fashion site with 2.4 million daily readers. It is an ambitious project, including its own fashion TV, and in partnership with retailers, to emphasise positive monetising strategies. Key to the success of Minmote: it knows its audience and it makes fashion accessible to all, not just an elitist audience. It looks good too, and I like

that there is a newsy angle to it, something so difficult to accomplish with fashion content. Digital fashion journalism at its best.

Video is hot, and getting hotter as we start a new year. The Straits Times of Singapore, Best Use of Online Video winner, scored big with its video series, "It Changed My Life," in which local people told of turning points in their lives, and how sometimes struggles and painful situations led to the next level of achievement.

With this project, the Singapore Straits Times demonstrated that, in the end, one can advance and innovate while using traditional journalism as the foundation for everything new.

At the heart of all of these winning projects is a good story. That is the one element that has not changed. With a good story at the start engagement is guaranteed. The rest is a matter of providing the adequate platform for the story, deciding when the best time is to post it, and taking advantage of all that digital journalism and the current technology offer us.

Congratulations to the winners. They now provide us with a textbook of fantastic digital storytelling examples.

Mario García is CEO of García Media. He is also Senior Adviser on News Design/Adjunct Professor, Columbia University School of Journalism.

"AT THE HEART OF ALL OF THESE WINNING PROJECTS IS A GOOD STORY. THAT IS THE ONE ELEMENT THAT HAS NOT CHANGED. WITH A GOOD STORY AT THE START ENGAGEMENT IS GUARANTEED."

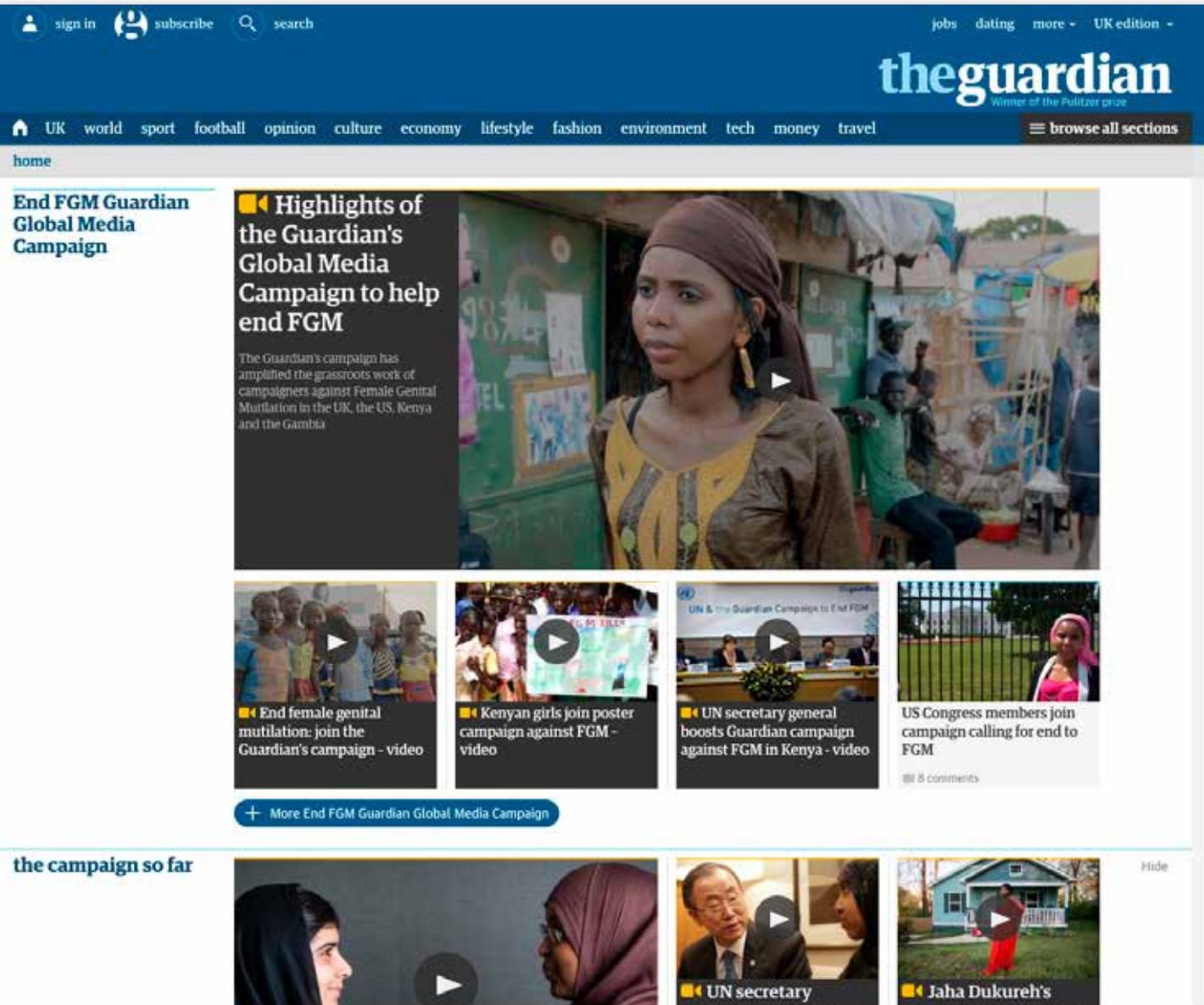
BEST NEWS WEBSITE

THE GUARDIAN



PROJECT:
THEGUARDIAN.COM





The Guardian has a history stretching back almost 200 years of journalism that has seen it go from being a metropolitan newspaper to a national one to a truly international one with newsrooms in the UK, the US and Australia. Worldwide, it reaches more than 110 million unique browsers each month.

Why this award now?

The Guardian's website relaunched in January 2015 not simply with a new look but a ground-up rebuild involving designers, journalists, user-experience architects, product managers, developers and software engineers.

The new site aims to present a more "compact" view of the news

agenda as it changes throughout the day and night with visual clues to each story's relative importance and its editorial tone, for example whether it is a breaking news story or a live blog, analysis, opinion, feature or review.

Visual elements such as photo galleries, videos, and interactives that were once housed on separate pages are now embedded within the

stories they relate to with extensive use of scrolling/swiping images designed with multiple end-user devices in mind.

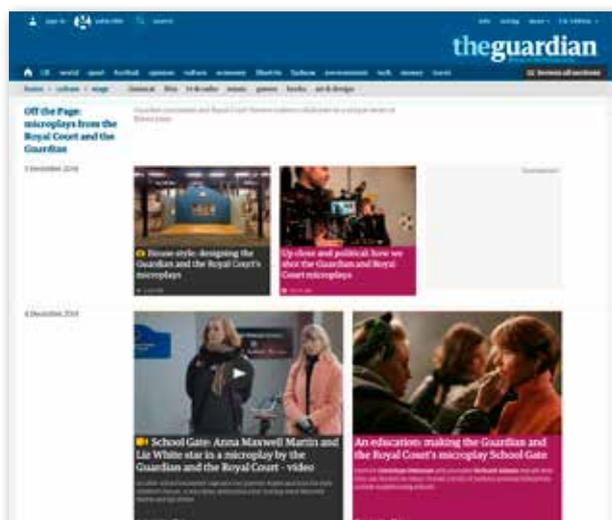
In line with The Guardian's emphasis on community, the comments in discussion threads can now also be presented in the first screen of an article and not only below the fold.

The Guardian's journalists are also now encouraged to share what they have themselves been reading that day with a collection of recom-

mended links called "what we are reading."

The innovations and the way they are presented puts The Guardian in a class of its own, but it is the content that makes it stand out. As judge Mario García of García Media put it: "Perhaps one of the best digital displays for any newspaper in the world. I like the way the brand is carried out digitally, but also how storytelling plays such a key role." That storytelling has seen the publisher break global scoops

of course, but perhaps less well-known is its continued tradition of following smaller stories over a long period; stories often ignored by other mainstream rivals. Women's health issues are as likely to make the front page as the latest misbehaviour by US presidential candidates. Minimum wage worker stories are expanded with in-depth coverage over extended periods. Most of all the paper has put huge effort into creative uses of data that add a further dimension to shock stories that are simply splashed



“WE ARE CONSTANTLY LOOKING TO IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCE FOR READERS VISITING OUR SITE, WITH TEAMS ACROSS THE ORGANISATION USING EVERYTHING AT THEIR DISPOSAL TO ENSURE WE ARE ABLE TO PUT OUR INNOVATIVE, INSPIRING AND INFORMATIVE JOURNALISM IN FRONT OF AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE.”

elsewhere. A case in point is the diligent detailing of all the figures behind US citizens shot by police. Live blogs have become common home-page leads as unfolding stories and debates are narrated as they develop.

Tailoring the tale

The new site contains personalised elements that allow you to quickly visit the areas of the site you go to most often – all of which can be accessed and edited or deactivated as the user prefers. In the process of researching preferences, The Guardian also expanded its own research and understanding of user behaviour. The site’s designers say that there are three main motives to visit the homepage; “update,” “extend” and “discover.”

“Update” means those readers who visit The Guardian – often many times a day – to find out about the news-agenda in general, or about news from their area of interest.

“Extend” means digging deeper into a specific story while “discover,” is people hoping for inspiration and surprise. The aim of the new design is to satisfy all three as part of which the design has shifted away from rigid templates of lay-

outs by content type and instead to a concept of content “containers” containing all relevant content (photos, opinion, facts, updates, backgrounders, analysis, comments) grouped together and able to be tailored into homepages in different ways to suit readers with different interests, using different devices, and from different parts of the world.

The Guardian’s team described it as “a great honour to have been named Best News Site at this year’s WAN-IFRA awards. By being a data-driven, open-source, interactive home for new forms of journalism, we aim to produce world-class reporting for a global audience.

“We relaunched theguardian.com in January this year – changes included presenting readers with more visual clues about each story’s relative importance and its editorial tone and seamless integration of our videos, photogalleries and interactives into everything we publish.”

And the results of the redesign to date?

“Since then our global traffic has grown by 20 percent, with more than two-thirds of our audience

now coming from outside the UK. We also recently reached a milestone of over 140 million unique browsers. A few months ago we also launched an international homepage for our readers outside of the UK, US and Australia, giving them the option to see a more global selection of stories when they visit the site.

“Data informs a large part of our storytelling and has been integral to award-winning projects such as The Counted – which records the people killed by the police and other law enforcement agencies in the United States through both verified reporting and crowdsourced information.

“We are constantly looking to improve the experience for readers visiting our site, with teams across the organisation using everything at their disposal to ensure we are able to put our innovative, inspiring and informative journalism in front of as many people as possible.”

BEST DIGITAL ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

TELEKURIER ONLINE MEDIEN



PROJECT:

OMV: EDUCATION NEEDS INNOVATION
(OMV: BILDUNG BRAUCHT INNOVATION)



Vienna-based KURIER is Austria's leading quality newspaper, OMV is Austria's largest listed manufacturing company, together they combined skills to come up with a campaign about educational possibilities for women called "Education Needs Innovation" ("Building Braucht Innovation").

Why this campaign?

OMV sponsors a wide variety of educational programs for women, such as the "Open Lab" IMBA, scholarship programmes at the Montanuni Leoben and University of Vienna, the "Techniqueens" programme for young women and

tech, the "Technisches Museum" in Vienna. It engages in market research initiatives and promotions, but it felt that not enough people were aware of its activities supporting women and education so it came to KURIER for help.

Goals

With the aim being broader awareness within a targeted demographic, KURIER opted for a cross-media approach with multi-media content, social media, native advertising, and programmatic buying – all the key ingredients of a modern campaign combining cost-efficiency, engagement and the trust in the brand.

Implementation

The first step was a series of round table discussions with the OMV team, their partners, and Sandra Baierl, the lead editor, who had an in-depth knowledge of OMV and its initiatives. Right from the beginning the process itself became part of the campaign with the round table discussions photographed and filmed (they are available on YouTube).

In addition to videos showing the discussions (including invited guests) the team put together a quiz about maths, physics, and geology called "How Einstein are you?" that challenged readers, and in the pro-

cess, explained details of university scholarships as well as free entry to science exhibitions.

“Education Needs Innovation” received more than 9 million cross-media contacts, far exceeding our expectations. The campaign totaled 4 million impressions via the “Campaign Extension,” 65,000 unique visits to the OMV Education Special on KURIER, 16,000 clicks into content via social media, 4,000 completed quizzes and reached well over 1.2 million print readers. Social media platforms extended the reach of the content and then using their user data and behavioral targeting KURIER involved other sites in its ecosystem. Native advertising was used to spread the message in a multiple pronged approach dubbed the KURIER Campaign Extension.

Programmatic ad buying extended that reach to other popular Austrian sites and also drove traffic back to KURIER. Dedicated content

was also run in the Business and Lifestyle sections of the print paper with all elements of the mix driving users to each other.

Results

The KURIER Network claims some 9 million people reached in total with 4 million impressions and 65,000 UVs to the OMV Education Special. Social media generated 16,000 clicks, and some 4,000 people completed the quizzes. 209,000 copies of print paper were read by more than 500,000 readers.

Meet the team

Although he has since gone on to found his own digital agency (NIMEH & Partners) George Nimeh was Chief Digital Officer at KURIER throughout the period of the campaign. As he explains:

“Education Needs Innovation” (“Building Braucht Innovation”) represents the next-generation in

online advertising and is the result of an intense collaboration between KURIER and OMV.

As with most creative and innovative projects, great care must be taken to bring the relevant stakeholders on board. We took great care to spend time to review and explain not only the specifics of the campaign strategy and goals, but also we why this was a different approach and how it would be uniquely positioned for success.”

Unsurprisingly for a campaign that drew together elements such as social, native, and programmatic, Nimeh found that a significant part of the project was managing people’s reactions to the technology and the culture change.

“Achieving true innovation within legacy businesses, including (or perhaps especially) legacy media, is hard. Structurally and organisationally, there is often a lot of resistance. There can be tension





over budget allocation, there are often power struggles between departments, and sometimes corporate politics plays a role in decision making. These factors make it that much harder to get everyone on board. The good thing is that despite these challenges, we now know it is possible.”

Nimeh can afford to look back with satisfaction over the ultimate success of the project

“We challenged the best media agency plans, and we won. KURIER delivered the right people at the right time in the right place with the right content. ‘Education Needs Innovation’ received over 9 million cross-media contacts, far exceeding our expectations. The campaign totaled 4 million impressions via

the ‘Campaign Extension,’ 65,000 unique visits to the OMV Education Special on KURIER, 16,000 clicks into content via social media, 4,000 completed quizzes and reached well over 1.2 million print readers.”

The WAN-IFRA World Digital Media Award was another feather in the team’s cap

“Winning the WAN-IFRA World Digital Media Awards Best Digital Advertising Campaign was also a fantastic validation of our efforts and confirmed my personal belief that innovation and success are highly dependent on creative leadership and the determination to see things through. It’s also a clear sign than given the right team, big ideas can come from small markets.

Our best result was the feedback from OMV Head of Corporate Branding, Christoph Meixner who said, “Education Needs Innovation is by far our most creative and innovative campaign of the year.”

Although Nimeh has now left KURIER, the newspaper’s campaign can be seen both as the inspiration for his latest venture, and for other media looking to be more ambitious in their approaches to multiple media advertising for the SME market.

“We proved that it is possible to think out of the box and innovate in small/midsize markets. Given the success of the campaign, our hope is to evolve our strategy into a framework and deliver similar work to other partners using our new platform and approach.”

BEST DATA VISUALISATION

THE NORWEGIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION (NRK)



PROJECT:

NORWEGIAN HOMICIDES
OVER A 10-YEAR PERIOD

Foto: Tom Øverlie / NRK

«NOE KLIKKER I HODET NÅR JEG DRIKKER»



FOTO: TOM ØVERLIE / NRK

BASTØY (NRK.no) Han vet at han kan bli styggsinna og farlig når han drikker. Likevel drikker han seg til mot for å bli med på det som skal bli kjærestens siste bytur.

Når de kommer til utestedet i sentrum bestiller han et brett med shots for å spandere på andre og drikke selv. Deretter blir det «helt svart».

– Jeg klarer ikke å styre det, og jeg har ikke kontroll på det som skjer. Jeg har ikke kontroll på noen ting og kan være vekk i mange timer. Jeg har hatt mange søndager hvor jeg har våknet opp, dratt rundt og bedt folk om unnskyldninger.

Publisert 10.06.2014, kl. 19:07



Journalist
Anne Vinding
@AnneVinding



fotograf
Tom Øverlie



Journalist
Marit Higrav

By detailing every single one of a nation's homicides over a decade, the team at NRK found compelling evidence of patterns linking them to mental illness. Presenting those findings with carefully chosen illustrations helped turn an indigestible amount of information into a form that makes sense on a very human level.

Goals

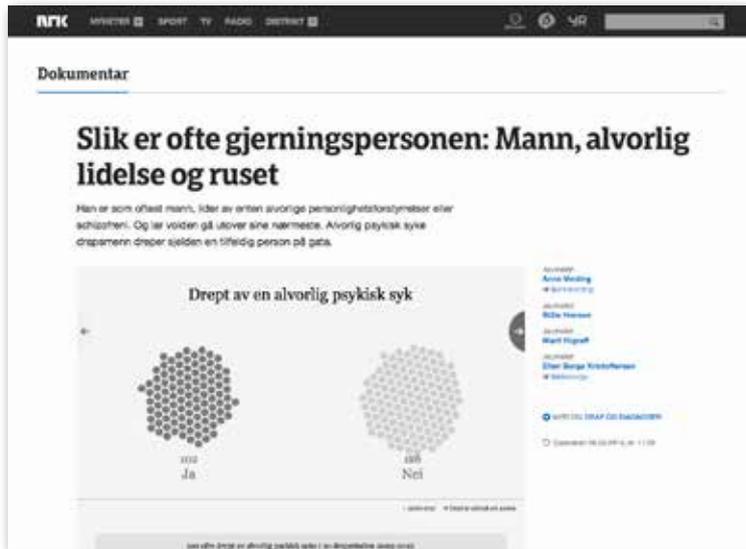
The aim was to do what the government itself had never done – to examine every single murder to see if there was a common theme.

Compellingly, the team were able to show that more than half of all murders were committed by people with a serious psychiatric

illness and that over half of these were under the influence of drugs when they killed.

Implementation

Data journalism may be the buzzword of the moment but putting this project together involved a lot of very-old fashioned shoe-leather and telephone journalism.



Ståle Hansen, project manager and journalist at NRK explains: “There weren’t any really good government numbers or figures available apart from only one relevant report, which was a few years old and only looked at a five-year period. So we decided to go bigger and do the largest analysis ever in Norway.

“The problem was that we didn’t know how many court cases there had been due to Norway’s three court system,” Hansen adds. “With a Lower, Middle, and High Court there could be three large documents for every single case. There is a digital database where courts are required to input and store the data but in practice that was only done in 30 percent of cases. So we had no choice but to call around some sixty courts across the country. The courts have a requirement to give you access to the records but you have to know exactly which conviction and which precise date you are talking about ... so there was a lot of legwork.”



The results of all of this legwork was a gallery of 102 victims (all in agreement with the families concerned), which when clicked on told the story from the point of view of the relatives.



“A big part of the project was handling the relatives,” observes Hansen. “You have to consider the human side and take care of that ethically and well.”

Infographics and visualisations helped present statistics and broader perspectives to enable readers to either see the big picture or zoom into individual cases.

Results

In addition to being an extraordinary and moving piece of work, the result was a major debate amongst Norway’s population and politi-

“IT’S A LOT OF WORK, BUT IT’S REALLY REWARDING AND VERY IMPORTANT, BECAUSE WE CAN’T LEAVE THIS ALL TO THE RESEARCHERS. IT’S ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS YOU CAN DO AS A JOURNALIST NOW.”

cians about the nature of psychiatric care and drug rehabilitation.

The Norwegian government decided to establish a specialised homicide database along similar lines to that created by NRK.

The brains and the team

Hansen is the first to admit that while it was an obviously important task to take on, it was also a tough one in many ways.

“It’s a very dark subject; not something you would personally choose, not least since it started with a brutal murder in Norway. A 16-year-old girl was killed and the body wasn’t found so as the searches spread it was all over the news and local communities were involved looking for her.

When they found her and arrested her killer he turned out to have serious psychological problems and had tried to do this before, and that led to a general concern about how we treat people with need psychiatric help.”

That case was the inspiration, but the job of translating that into usable data-journalism fell to Hansen.

“At the time, we were a very new unit inside NRK – we had only been in existence for less than a year when we started on the project. Our job was not to report on the news, but to dig into it in search of the bigger picture.”

Having started to collect the documents from so many sources the team used a simple tool to collate it: “We used Google Docs because for journalistic usage it was the perfect tool – there were five of us and it enabled us to work together on a shared document,” Hansen says. “We read every single document and every one had to be read by two people for quality assurance before making decisions about whether the case involved psychological problems. Google Docs was the perfect tool for us to do that.”

That period of data collation was the heaviest part of the task and took some three months.

“It felt like a bit of a gamble as we didn’t know how this would turn out – we weren’t sure we had a case, since at the beginning, we thought that maybe it was only 10 percent of murders that could be traced to psychological problems,” Hansen says. “When we realised that half of the murders were

connected to the problem it made it easier having to work on all those terrible documents.”

Putting the data together was one part of the project. Presenting it was the next priority.

“The graphics element had two sides. Before we started, we already had an idea of how it would look with a picture wall displaying all of the victims and the ability to click on each one and get every single case. What we hadn’t worked out yet was the infographics part with the different coloured balls giving data like sex and age. That was done by a special group with one journalist, one programmer, and one interactive designer.”

More than one member of the team has joked that they would never have started if they had known how much work was involved, but that hasn’t stopped them moving on to their next big projects examining cold cases and the issues of extremism and the radicalisation of youth.

“It’s a lot of work, but it’s really rewarding and very important, because we can’t leave this all to the researchers. It’s one of the most important things you can do as a journalist now.”

BEST TABLET APPLICATION

AXEL SPRINGER'S 'EPOS'



PROJECT:

THE APP EPOS – HISTORY AND SCIENCE
(EPOS – WISSEN UND GESCHICHTE)



Axel Springer is one of Europe's leading news publishers, and its strong culture of innovation has produced many eye-catching products. EPOS is an immersive multimedia storytelling platform for tablets, and to produce it, Axel Springer teamed up with Sprylab GmbH and its Purple Publishing Suite of tools, which enabled the editors to create their immersive history tales without the need for programming.

With the choice of the First World War as the subject for the first edition of the application the team from Axel Springer also collaborated with the Deutsches Historisches Museum (German

Historical Museum) to edit video footage that had never been seen before.

The app

EPOS aimed to use all the power of multimedia to allow readers to dive into the story of the First World War with the videos, animations, and interactive elements integrated into the reading process rather than bolted on with push buttons to for activation. The idea was that they would begin playing as the reader reached that point in the narrative. The reader reads at their own speed, and the rich media elements come into play automatically at the appropriate moment.

Implementation

Hans Evert Managing Editor, Project Lead and “father” of EPOS explains how the app came to be.

“Back in 2012 there was a lot of interest in immersive storytelling with things like [the NYT’s] Snow Fall, and so on, and we were thinking that’s great but we don’t see this kind of immersive content being funded just by adverts. We felt that it called for a paid content approach which meant finding a topic people were prepared to pay for. We did some research and interviewed the print magazine market and found that in Germany all the publishers are in crisis mode, but some magazine titles are still performing

very well. Notable amongst these were the history magazines. We thought that there is an audience willing to pay for it – not least since print magazines are high cost items with some costing up to 10 euros a copy. Which means that if you can deliver high quality content then you have a chance of finding an audience. With history proving so popular, and the anniversary of World War I looming, it was the natural topic to start with.”

Which is how the first issue of EPOS, “When Europe committed suicide” came into being.

The goal was to take the best of new forms of journalistic storytelling, and deliver stories in a way that would appeal to a high-end consumer. On the way, it was also essential that the interface should be as intuitive as possible and that interactive elements should complement, not interrupt the narrative.

“It is a completely new digital magazine product. Yes, we were looking at the multimedia stories coming out of The New York Times and the Guardian with NSA Decoded, and we analysed their features, but the concept of EPOS is that it’s all about reading on the one hand, but where the reading is the focus and the multimedia elements have to



“It is a completely new digital magazine product. ... If you start scrolling, everything appears automatically with no tapping as you go.”

be simple and convenient. If you start scrolling, everything appears automatically with no tapping as you go. Even my mother finds it very appealing, which is amazing considering her attitude to technical devices.”

EPOS was implemented using the Purple Publishing Suite, during a three month production phase that saw the software turned into a kind of content container so that all the interactive elements are integrated and subsequent issues of EPOS require the new content to be dropped into the container but no further programming is needed.

Goals and results

This was not a project driven by profit margin. It was always more of a proof of concept and Hans Evert sees the goals and results as falling into two categories; the product’s reception from readers, and the learning points for the team.

“The first thing is that it was really enjoyable. It was demanding, of

course, because we had a very small team consisting of myself, the Editor, Julieta Romero, and the Art Director, Oliver Polich. I’m a print journalist, so I know how to handle text, but for EPOS, we had to tell a story with so much more. And the experience of infographics and videos broadened my personal horizons, and I think those of everyone in the team.

“What we learned, and are still in the process of implementing across the whole [Axel Springer] group, is storytelling is not just about the text. That may sound obvious, but we have a big print legacy and with that a focus on the text first with photographs as an addition. Now, we have to understand storytelling in a much broader sense and that was a huge learning from EPOS,” Evert says.

In addition to contributing to internal cultural change, EPOS proved its point about the possibilities of new paying audiences.

“The reaction of the audience was also amazing. In the edition about

First World War, for example, we had a chapter about the assassination of Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo. We made a map of old Sarajevo, and as you read the narrative, you got an animation of the route being driven and the point where the assassination took place. A lot of feedback described it as an amazing experience to be able to consume the story in that new way. There was a lot of interest in EPOS as a model for educational material and even a blueprint for modern schoolbooks as a way of explaining and understanding facts,” Evert says.

Perhaps even more importantly from the point of view of a publishing house, EPOS demonstrated a new market for content. “It showed that if you want to get paid for content then you need to focus on quality and a good user experience. In the digital era, people are still willing to pay, but you have to show them that you have the quality and the product is worth it,” Evert says.

BEST TABLET APPLICATION

AFTENPOSTEN



PROJECT:
AFTENPOSTEN+





Aftenposten is Norway's largest newspaper. Aftenposten's online edition, Aftenposten.no, averages more than 78 million page views per month. Aftenposten+ is the paper's new app, replacing its first generation predecessor (Aftenposten for iPad) from two years ago.

Aftenposten+ gives access to both Aftenposten's print edition and online edition with the aim of providing a comprehensive and engaging reading experience. Personalisation options include the ability to select whether editions download automatically for offline reading, with downloads set to take place in the background while us-

ing other applications, or while the device is in sleep mode. The app provides access to the content from the newspaper editions the evening before paper subscribers get their delivered as well as integrating constant news updates from Aftenposten.no.

The app suggests "recommended" reading articles (about 10) to help users discover content, particularly long format, an implementation based on reader research before the launch. In addition to the content from the daily edition of Aftenposten, the app also gives access to those all-important extra content items such as obituaries, crosswords, sudoku, and the full newspaper archive.

Goals and achievements.

Even Teimansen, Editorial Product Manager at Aftenposten Mobil and the project leader for the new Aftenposten+ app, is cheerfully candid about the team's goals when they embarked on the project. "Oh yes, we had a lot of goals, but the number one was that it should be better than the previous version – and that goal I think we can say we have achieved."

The target to beat in this case was a previous generation app which was essentially epaper. "The background to the project was that we already had an app for iPad called Aftenposten, which had been on the market for two years and was

basically the paper edition, but enhanced and made to look better on tablets.”

It wasn't just the look that needed updating, it was the need to work with a more digital-first approach.

“Previously, creating tablet content was labour intensive in terms of production, and the results didn't look fresh in terms of design. You could read the edition, but it didn't add a lot to the user experience, so we wanted to enhance that. We did market research to see what the readers wanted and that became the starting point for the new app. The aim was all about making it more than just an iPad app, but also full tablet and mobile.”

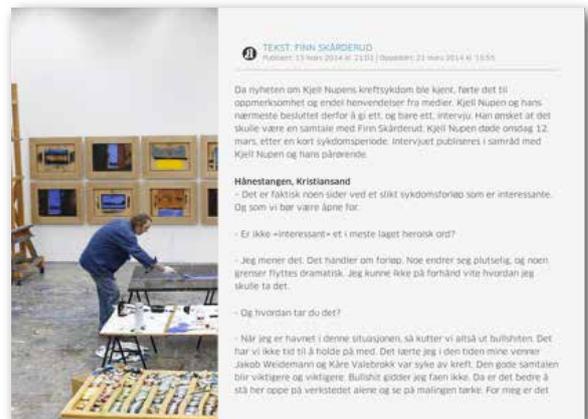
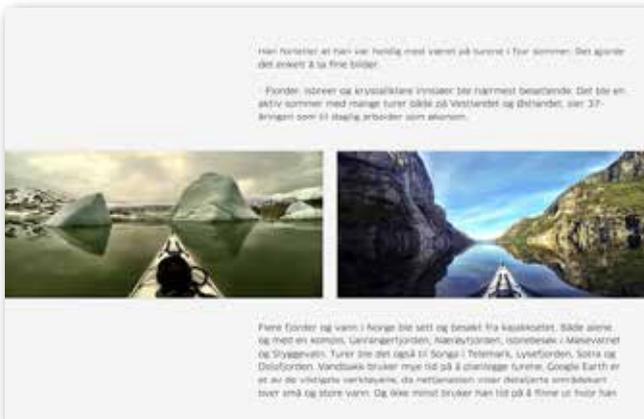
While Teimansen was unhappy with the old look and feel, that wasn't the principle concern that emerged from the research. “Much of the feedback from readers was about functionality, and so the concept we came up with was making everything from the paper editions and online available in one application for a premium user experience that was very different from epaper.”

Developing the app called for both external expertise and a large degree of internal buy-in with as many different departments being involved in the process as possible.

“Some aspects of the development were a real pleasure, and some

were really hard, although an external technology partner helped us create the app. Since we meant it to be as easy as possible for the journalists, we wanted to use the same CMS and platform that we do for the online edition and that brought challenges all by itself ensuring that nothing got lost in the translation to the app. We were helped by a developing team from Schibsted technical, who were very committed to the project and did a lot of work, but we ensured involvement from a lot of working groups from journalists, to developers, to senior editors and management.”

Asked what he's most pleased about with the app (aside from its tendency to win awards), Teiman-



“Much of the feedback from readers was about functionality, and so the concept we came up with was making everything from the paper editions and online available in one application for a premium user experience that was very different from epaper.”

sen says “I think there are two things. For me, the best thing is the content, but of course, that content is available in other formats, so what makes the app has to be a combination of that and the user experience, which seems to be appreciated both by the readers and internally within the company. The end result is the premium experience we were looking for, and it is stylish to navigate around, so I think we can say it manages a nice balance of content and look and feel.”

Reader response has obviously been a key criteria for a project that started with user group research and while Even is convinced of the superiority of the new app he is realistic enough to concede that migrating an existing user base is still an ongoing task involving a blend of education and seduction.

“When it comes to the goals for user numbers, we still have some work to do, and it will take time to get everyone away from epaper. Some readers are hard to turn around. This is partly to do with the age of our readers and their habits, but the new app represents



a big departure from the epaper approach and one that is clearly better.

“We’re also still working on functionality and there are things we haven’t yet implemented so we are hoping that the ongoing evolution of the app will be a tool that helps win an ever larger audience. What I can say is that we have tripled the number of daily and weekly users

and sessions in our new app, Aftenposten+, compared to our previous app (which was named Aftenposten for iPad). It’s been very enjoyable for us, and we have got a lot of feedback from readers who have moved on from the previous app. They are thrilled, so while there will always be things we can work on to improve, I have to say the whole process has been a pleasure.”

BEST MOBILE SERVICE

WELT KOMPAKT



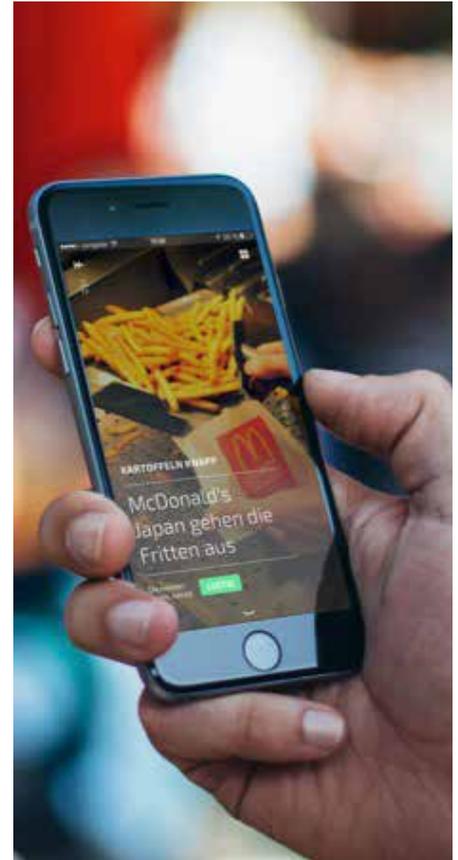
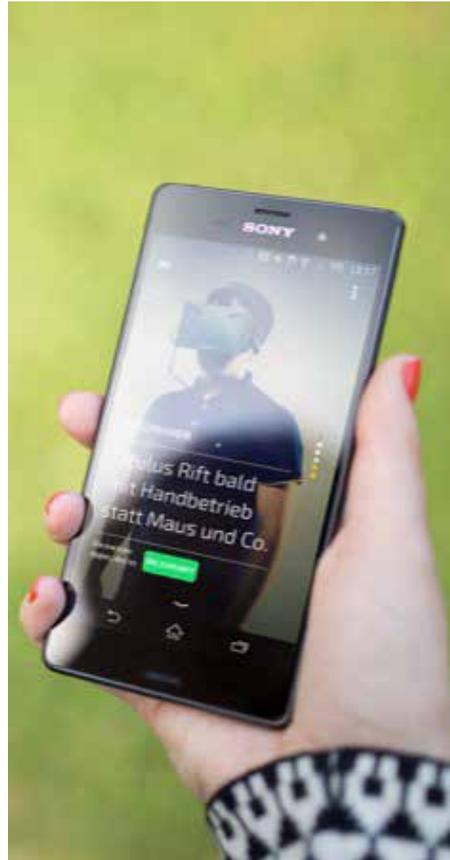
PROJECT:
KOMPAKT – NEWS ON THE GO



KOMPAKT.
News on the go.

For iOS and Android.

Made in Berlin by **WELTN24**



WELT KOMPAKT is the brainchild of Axel Springer SE – one of Europe's biggest publishers and home to flagship titles such as BILD and WELT. Importantly it has long seen the importance of multimedia and digital media now represent 50 percent of its revenues. WELT KOMPAKT comes from its own internal start-up culture.

Why the WELT KOMPAKT service?

WELT KOMPAKT sprang from Die WELT, Axel Springer's flagship

newspaper. The parent paper is a broadsheet in the classic mode – originally modelled on the Times of London. Like many broadsheets, however, it doesn't necessarily appeal to younger audiences. Hence the publishing of a compact edition, WELT KOMPAKT, a 32-page cut-down version of the main broadsheet which launched in May 2004 and aimed at a younger demographic. Ten years later WELT KOMPAKT launched on iOS and where the KOMPAKT paper edition was a cut-down version of the parent paper, the iOS app is an entirely new product, created purely for mobile and enjoying massive

success amongst a user group that does not buy print.

Goals

Ten years after WELT ventured into WELT KOMPAKT on paper, Axel Springer is constantly looking for new ways to recover audiences that don't feel well served by traditional newspaper models. Where WELT KOMPAKT was an experiment with a new format of an existing media, the KOMPAKT app aimed to break new ground and produce a 100 percent mobile product for people who see their mobile as the No. 1 media platform.

Implementation

Stories are short and presented in a card-style approach with users encouraged to respond to them much as they would a Tinder-style dating app. Swipe Left to dispense of subjects that aren't of interest, swipe Right to be presented with more of the same. Swipe vertically to drill down and read more. Because the format fits the mobile so

well, and because the card style is very well suited to memes the content enjoys very high sharing rates. Users who are interested in shared content from app users, but who don't have the app themselves are directed to a responsive website. Most interesting of all is the comments system, which helps simplify commenting by auto suggesting the most frequent comments, and letting users see what others said

in the process. The meme approach extends to the comments system as well, transforming simple, fast comments into meme-style images that are in turn very shareable.

Results

The app has now been downloaded more than 150,000 times since it was made available on the 10th anniversary of the paper (May 2014).

INTERVIEW WITH DIRK NOLDE

Dirk Nolde describes himself as an Editorial Owner – “I’m part of the editorial team but work with product development. I do both website concepts and journalism, so I’m kind of a hybrid editor/product manager.” He’s also the father of the KOMPAKT mobile project.

How did the project develop?

“The goal was an app that was easier to digest, so we went for card-by-card news, usually featuring a map, a video, and two sentences and that clicked with people. It can be a bit like Tinder with swiping things that interest you and swiping vertically if you want to dive in. All the way the idea was about breaking things down to make it shorter and more to the point and that really appealed to a younger demographic.”

Did the journalists have any resistance to the new format?

“No, none. The KOMPAKT mobile app was a totally separate form from DIE WELT and very much a product of the Axel Springer accelerator so there were no cultural problems.”

Was it hard to implement technically?

“No it was relatively straightfor-



ward. Creating an iOS app isn't easy, but we had a developer team working in Poland. I guess we imagined at the beginning that it would be easier than it proved to be, but I can't say that it was hard because the development team were really great, and we got huge support from Apple.”

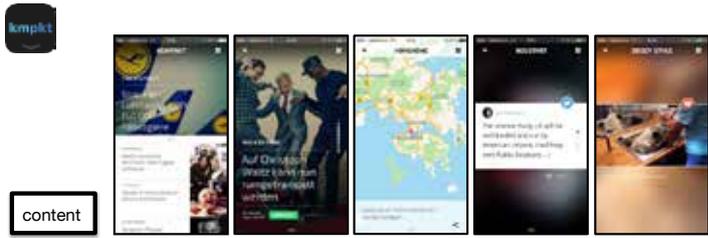
What stood out in particular for you about the project?

“The comment system. We weren't aware of just how creative our readers would be when it came to including a bit of obscene language, so we had to get clever and create a constantly updated blacklist. There is also a semantic engine to help exclude words.

Then we wanted to simplify comment so there is a template-like system, which means you only need to fill in a word – so you might get ‘I think this is a....’ and you add your comment while also seeing what most other people say about it. Then we wanted to make that very shareable so that the result looks like a meme and is easy to spot in your Facebook stream.”

Aside from the user numbers what are you most pleased about personally?

“As a journalist, I think I'm most pleased about the process, which is about being able to tell stories in a shorter and more to the point way. That is really something. On the one hand, DIE WELT has the big story from the foreign correspondent, and we have information specific to our user's situation. With KOMPAKT, we have connected these to give people the content that's right for where they are reading.”



content

KOMPAKT has news (= hard news) and entertainment (including, but not dominated by, cat content). As KOMPAKT works with a card based system, KOMPAKT's dedicated editorial staff has to work and write differently.

Each story is split into several information bits. One bit = one card = one screen: a text, a picture, a map, a tweet, a youtube video. Texts are pretty short, 294 characters max.

The idea is to feed users one aspect of a news story a time. Feedback suggests that this makes it easier to digest the information. Some have spoken – some critically – of „snackable news“. We like that.

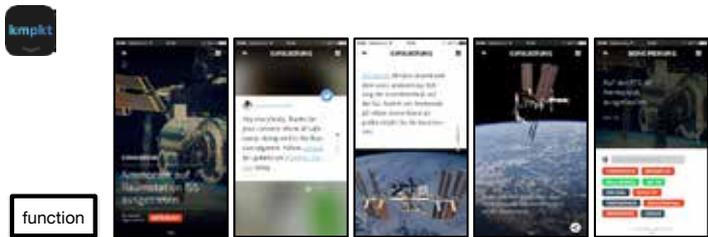



form

KOMPAKT has a starting page and stories. That's it. Users simply swipe to the left to navigate through the day's worth of news.

It's easy to get the gist of what's happening by simply swiping horizontally along those story title cards. This is a behavior often seen with homepages of news websites, or Facebook, or Tinder: KOMPAKT works like your social network stream.

With stories of interest, it's one swipe to the top to read all about it. It's simple and made for being used one handed, just with your thumb.

function

User can comment on stories in KOMPAKT – with one word, so they complete the sentence: „I think this is [blank]“. It's to the point, simple, fun.

Answers are fed into a system that determines if the comment is positive or negative; the words get colour coded. The more users comment, the more suggestions you get, and you can still put in your own.

After giving your thought on the topic, the app comes up with a picture: your comment vs. the majority's opinion. This can be shared on Facebook (that's why it looks a bit like a meme).

When users do so, a link is included that leads to KOMPAKT's website. Even without the app you can read the story that may have found it's way into your Facebook timeline because someone shared one of those KOMPAKT comment picture.



Apple named KOMPACT one of the best apps of 2014. Fifty percent of users are under 30.

Meet the makers

Dirk Nolde (see interview on the previous page) led the KOMPACT mobile project.

“I’ve always been a journalist, but then two years ago I was part of a new unit in Axel Springer – an internal start-up accelerator developing new journalistic products. The goal was to do things differently, and we had half a dozen projects that became start ups ranging from celebrity coverage to football. One of those was KOMPACT. We were trying to deliver a different form of journalism and my involvement was to research the concept and head up the project. So I developed the basic idea and directed it from there.”

Where did the idea come from?

“On a trip to Palo Alto and San Francisco in 2013, we saw things like Yahoo Digest and Potluck [a social network] and those apps did something new in that they turned news into a stringent new form. We didn’t have that at the time – we had the usual breed of news websites with a mobile variant but they had the same content across them all. While we didn’t do any specific market research, we had a pretty good idea about the younger demographic and we felt that if we could get rid of the clutter the result would appeal to the always-on population.”

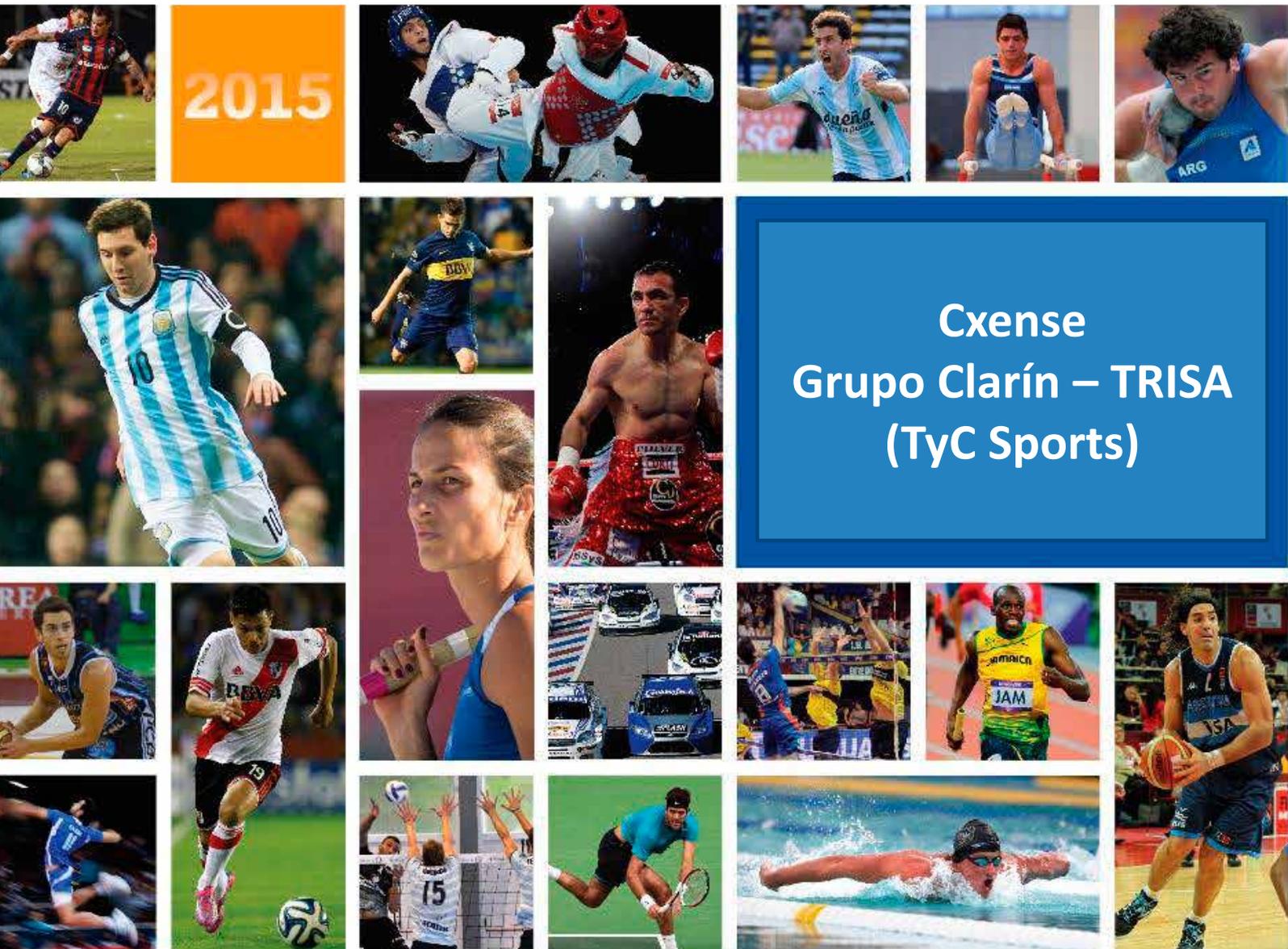
BEST READER ENGAGEMENT

GRUPO CLARÍN



PROJECT:

ECOSISTEMA DIGITAL
(DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM)



Cxense
 Grupo Clarín – TRISA
 (TyC Sports)

Grupo Clarín is the largest media conglomerate in Argentina including the Clarín newspaper but also cable TV, and radio stations.

The project

The idea of the Ecosistema Digital (Digital Ecosystem) was to stop treating the group as a collection of unconnected media entities and instead start to identify the behaviour of users across all of those

media with a view to optimising their experience.

With each radio station, TV channel, and newspaper having traditionally functioned as a separate company it was a considerable challenge to break down the barriers between them sufficiently well to establish clear visibility over the user journey from one medium to the next. The key to that, according to Grupo Clarín, was the use of big data – of crunching the

behavioural information available across individual media and social media networks and then using that information to supply a more tailored menu of content to people based on their preferences.

“Clarín has a strong and active presence on Facebook, Twitter and other social networks ... and the use of big data for offering personalised content is highly innovative” observed judge Rosana Fuentes Berain of Mexico Media Lab.

Miguel Fernandez, Head of Technology at Grupo Clarín, sets out the starting point for the transformation of the group from a disparate jumble of companies into a digital ecosystem. On the way, it was rapidly realised that while there were inevitable audience overlaps that could better be served, there was a culture of each media jealously guarding information about its own audience without necessarily digging deeper into that audience to find out more about it.

“Grupo Clarín paved the way for a project aiming at an integrated understanding of our audiences across all our media. Given that the company is truly multimedia [web, print, TV, radio], we have a number of distinct companies with very different characteristics, some with registered users but pretty much the majority with anonymous users surfing their sites. We understood that we had to get to know

our users in depth in order to be able to bring added value to their navigation and to be able to offer the greatest degree of personalisation possible across all platforms. Once we’d made that choice we set to work putting together teams in each business group to implement and improve the existing products.”

The appeal of a more joined-up approach to user identification is clear, and a logical first step to serving up customised content to suit different user groups. The problem, however, remained how best to find out more about users without being obtrusive in the user experience.

“We looked at different platforms and it was decided to perform two types of analysis; one online in real time and the other after the event – post-mortem as we called it. That means when the user accesses the media we offer content

and advertising according to their unique profile, then afterwards all the information [drawn from that interaction] is stored in a data warehouse and predictions applied as to future behaviour so as to improve the service.”

In other words the idea is to constantly learn from how engaged a user is with what is served up and makes predictions on the basis of that to try and do better in future. A self-improving system.

If it sounds complex, however, that’s because it is.

“Deep diving into data in the aim of finding information that can really be used is no simple task when there are tons and tons of data. We make a big point of distinguishing between ‘data’ and ‘information’ and having a lot of data doesn’t necessarily mean you have a lot of [useable] information.”



Red AGEA & Clarín.com



Complex, but clearly worthwhile since the results are immediate

“It’s fascinating, but complex, because you have to look at this from all the different points of view from the legal requirements of safeguarding personal data to the sociological aspects of understanding user behaviour across social networks. The most gratifying thing of all is to see the CTR of pages and the time spent on pages increasing as we progress.”

It also requires a total commitment to co-development of the tools in order to avoid duplication

“Corporate-wide technology management lays out the guidelines for co-working and AGEA (clarín.com) ARTEAR (TV station with a number of separate websites) LA VOZ DEL INTERIOR, LOS ANDES (Argentinian newspapers) RADIO MITRE (radio) CMD (games and e-commerce), plus TYC (sports channel) all roll out their own applications which are shared so as not to duplicate the work. Specialised units send the data to each platform to enrich the user experience.”

The results of which are all about personalisation: “Depending on the platform we can determine if you are a user who reads a lot of sport, and if we know which type of football fan you are we can send

you content tailored to reflect your team. Or if we know that you are a woman and you connect at six o’clock in the evening to browse suggestions for dishes, we can guess you are preparing supper and we can send you recipes. The type of content recommended is based on the characteristics that we obtain from surfing behaviour, and acts as an incentive to spend more time on our sites and consume further information or to follow relevant cross links to other sites in the group.”

All of which in turn gives more behavioural data to enable Grupo Clarín to fine-tune further.

BEST NEW PRODUCT

VERDENS GANG (VG)



PROJECT:
MINMOTE SOBAZAAR





Fem rå antrekk fra People's Choice Awards

Verdens Gang, owned by Schibsted, is best known for the VG tabloid, but it is also the home for VG niche publishing, which has already made a name for itself with Godt.no, and the Weight loss Club. Minmote.no ('my fashion/style') started life as another blog, but it rose above the crowd to become the leading fashion site in the country.

Norway's most read news-site/newspaper. VG's news-sites on desktop, mobile, tablet and traditional paper, has coverage of nearly 2.4 million daily readers, and VGs is among the most profitable news organisations in Europe.

The project

What made Minmote unusual was its lively approach, extensive use of

video (it hosts its own fashion TV) and the close linking to retailers; allowing readers to buy what they liked with the minimum number of clicks. This initially caused some controversy and saw the site referred to the Norwegian press ethical board. Minmote responded with clearer labelling – a move that pre-dates the global debates about native advertising that are going on worldwide.

“For our customers, Minmote has shown you can be relevant, critical, and still have smart shopping solutions.”

The aim was to keep the offbeat and personal vibe of a blog, while shortening the route from wanting to buying. In the process, VG transformed the blog, traditionally an amateur platform, into a revenue stream.

Implementation

Camilla Bjørn, Head of VG Niche Sites, explains how Minmote.no came about and what makes it special.

“Basically, Minmote started as a small fashion blog in VG. VG is traditionally very male, so the idea was to attract a female audience. Fashion blogs in Norway have not had a lot of traction to date – there is no example of one making it big. Single bloggers have done well, but there has never been a business model for scaling up. What we managed to do was to take Minmote up a league and make it really huge so that now it is the only really big and profitable fashion site in Norway. On the way, we took a lot from the momentum VG could provide – we took the best smart journalism and commercial solutions from the mother ship.”

Minmote may be “huge” for its niche, but it’s not a big operation behind the scenes.

“Minmote has three girls working on the site and two who work on



the TV site because we do a lot of fashion TV. That works really well and with each new fashion season we have a new series each episode of which gets some two to three hundred thousand unique views – which is huge in Norway.”

Asked what she takes most pride in personally about the development of Minmote, Bjørn emphasises the success of giving the team the freedom to make their own decisions and daring to be more personal than the competition.

“At the beginning it was really small, like most fashion blogs, and like most fashion blogs, it was also a bit toothless. When I took over I was convinced it would be possible to take it to a whole new level by daring to be different, and because I was convinced that women are smarter than fashion magazines take them for. That made it important to dare to step out of the box. With that, in terms of management the girls now do their thing and the result is very functional and helpful, very stylish all without being too highbrow.

A lot of fashion is too serious and elitist, and Minmote never excludes people – you don’t feel like you’re one of the people on the outside looking at the cool party, you’re part of it.”

In terms of finance, Bjørn is pleased to point out that the site more than covers its own costs.

“We’re not making huge money but we are making good money – certainly enough to cover the costs of editorial staff, and that makes it sustainable. We weren’t ever set a revenue target, instead the heads



of VG told us to run with it and see where it goes, and that is very important. We do have internal commercial benchmarks and the revenue is good, but with the commercial integrated links it’s all about exploring potential development.”

Those commercial integrated links refer to a policy of linking directly from articles and descriptions of items to retailer sites selling them. This caused some controversy with the national press ethics board since it was felt that it blurred the line between advertising and editorial, but VG rejects this and Bjørn strongly feels Minmote is offering readers a service.

“There are commercial links in editorial articles, which have raised ethical questions, but readers love it, and we are clear about the links,

which makes it very honest. It’s exactly the same issue as native advertising, which is becoming a must with the rise of ad blockers and the fact that banners are fast becoming obsolete. For our customers, Minmote has shown you can be relevant, critical, and still have smart shopping solutions.

“We were cited by the Norwegian ethical press board for the links because they weren’t seen as good enough, so we optimised the way we marked them, but polls and user questionnaires say that the readers didn’t share the board’s opinion. In the end, we are in the process of blurring borders, and we knew there might be trouble, but it was a fight we were ready for and stuck with it. To be innovative you have to dare to think differently.”

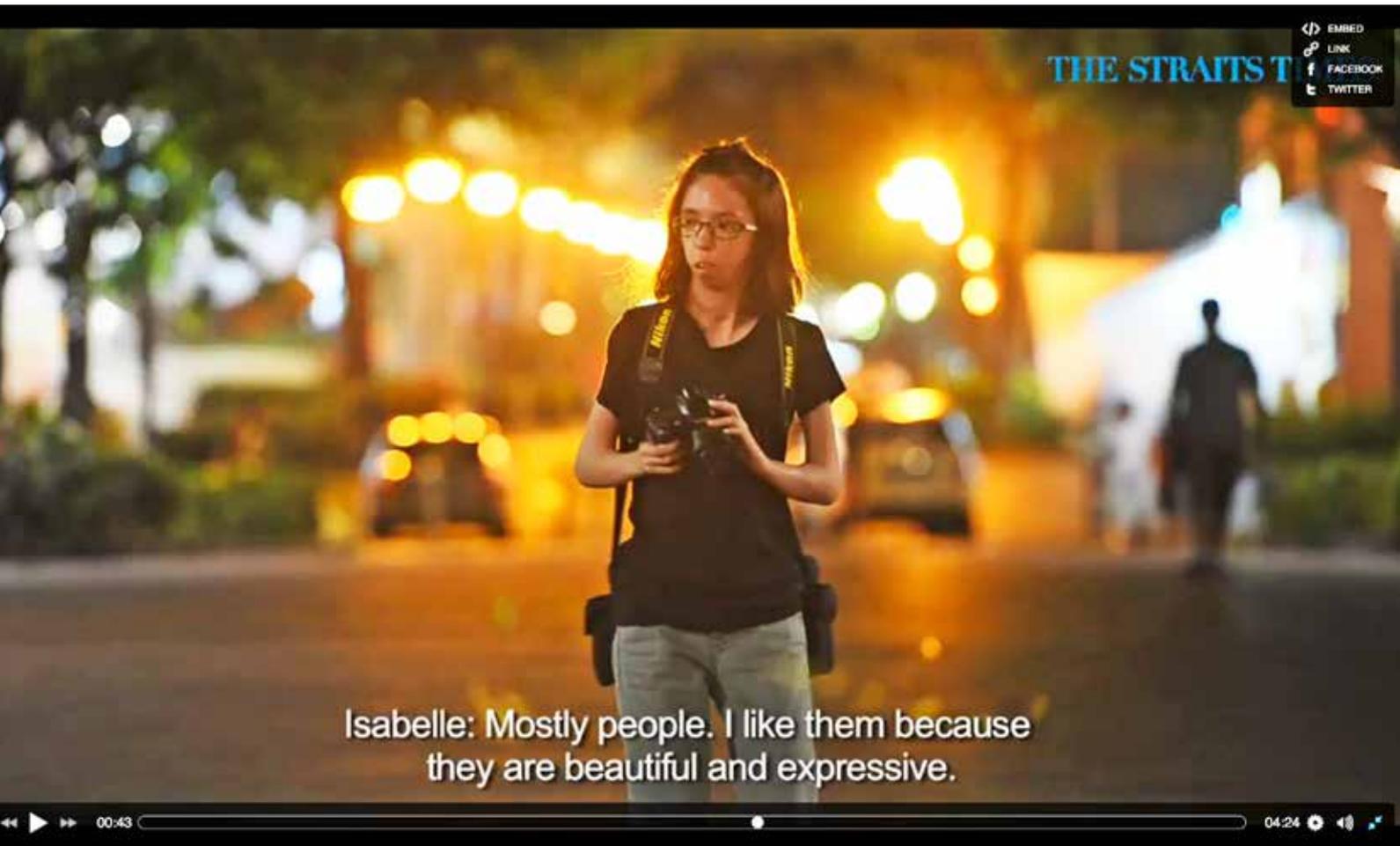
BEST USE OF ONLINE VIDEO

STRAITS TIMES



PROJECT:

IT CHANGED MY LIFE SERIES



Isabelle: Mostly people. I like them because they are beautiful and expressive.

The people of Singapore are traditionally reserved and insular in more ways than one, so getting them to open up and tell their life stories is no mean achievement. To do so as part of a joint print/online/video project so popular that it is now starting its second “season” is a real mark of achievement.

“‘It Changed My Life’ is about a turning point – an experience that sets people on a path to where they are now,” explains Shawn Lee Miller, filmmaker and producer for the series. What Miller has created is a series of cinematic-quality three-minute interviews with

individuals whose experiences, struggles, and setbacks have transformed their lives, often requiring near superhuman effort to overcome. The result is extraordinarily moving and has clearly struck a chord with the online audience.

“One profile features a woman who found that she had a sickness that prevented her from eating and meant that bleeding, however slight, was dangerous to her life. She refused to let it take over her life and remains very positive about it,” said Miller.

Other examples feature an ex-convict determined to turn over a new

leaf and a mother talking about how she coped with her severely disabled child, learning sign language to communicate and ultimately build a very touching bond with her daughter.

They are precisely the kind of powerful human stories that people immediately want to share with colleagues and friends, and that is precisely what has made them a runaway success online.

The making of the project

Hosted on Singapore Press Holdings’ own Razor TV video channel, “It Changed My Life” showcases

professional video production values but was born directly from a print concept. In the end, it is a hybrid print/online project in which each aspect stands alone as a pristine example of the potential of its medium.

As Miller explains: “The video is an accompaniment to the print series, and print and video work together as a weekly story about different people in Singapore who have gone through challenging times, sicknesses and disorders – and have succeeded.”

In fact, the story series began with a print journalist, Straits Times Senior Writer Wong Kim Hoh, who is so well-known for his written profiles that the public come to him with their stories. He and Miller discussed how this could be developed, and as Miller notes, “he gets the profiles, but his articles are long, and so I do a video version that is three minutes long and so a lot more web friendly.”

They also began trawling social media for various stories that are shared on Facebook and thus had

already demonstrated the power to resonate.

Getting the right feel to video

Having established the storylines, Miller’s next job is always to get the documentary feel of the shots. “The key thing we wanted was for it to look different from the typical news video, so we used DSLRs and in particular a Canon EOS C100 with interchangeable lens for the greater depth of field and cinematic look. The real challenge wasn’t techni-



“The key thing we wanted was for it to look different from the typical news video.”

cal – it was more that these people are relating stories from their past, and videos are a visual medium. You’re talking about taking drugs and life in prison [for instance], but it’s all retrospective, and I didn’t want to resort to using still pictures to tell that, so I needed a creative way to bring the story out. A lot of that came from natural symbols – a window, for example, takes on a whole new meaning when it is centre screen while the voice-over of the narrative tells a story. So we looked for those kinds of symbols. Because the writer would arrange to meet people at their houses, we try as much as possible to do the shoot there.”

Film background helps

From a professional perspective, it is key that Miller did not come from a newspaper background. He found himself working for The Straits Times after having started out at RazorTV, the video arm of the hold-

ing company. Initially he was doing short news clips for the website and this joint project with the print journalist enabled both him and the series to spread their wings.

His training was in film and TV at school, then he worked for six years in the TV industry, debuting as a director of documentaries. That background can be detected in the framing, timing, and pacing of the three-minute videos he does for The Straits Times. At the beginning, he was working on hard news videos for the publisher, usually one minute or less.

“In hard news I couldn’t really show off my skills [big smile], so this series was a chance to show them off a little bit more.”

Happy ‘ending’

The result is a second season of the series, complete with a sponsor. As well as a traffic generator, it is

seen as a bridge-building tool with the community it reports on and represents.

The video quality alone would have recommended this series for the award – in particular the determination to bring documentary values to a highly-sharable, online-friendly format, despite its inherent restrictions. What made it stand out from a publishing point of view, however, was the way it represented a best-of-breed collaboration between print and the talents of the video department.

Both played to their established strengths, with the print version sticking to its long-format and in-depth approach while the video brought that to a wider audience. In the process, the newspaper showcased its strength of talent while firmly establishing its credentials as a paper of the people it serves and informs.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Steve Shipline, WAN-IFRA contributing writer

Steve Shipline has been writing about digital media since the early 1990s for titles such as Campaign, Revolution, Business 2.0, and Wired. He regularly conducts research and reports for WAN-IFRA on a range of topics, such as programmatic advertising and wearables.



REPORT

Shaping the Future of News Publishing