

Blogging News Stories as They Happen

Blogging news stories as they unfold is one of the most exciting and controversial applications of technology that bloggers have discovered. One thing that makes the blogosphere so active is the fact that it is possible to update a blog instantaneously, so the news on blogs tends to be more current than the news in the paper, or on television. Unlike news delivered by these other media, news that appears on blogs does not have to travel through a series of editors and administrators before it reaches the public eye. This has some advantages, and some distinct disadvantages.

One of the most notable cases of news hitting a blog before appearing in other media took place in July 2005 when terrorism struck London. As passengers were evacuated from a subway car near an explosion, one man took several photographs of the scene with his cellular phone, and within an hour these images were posted online. First-person accounts of the catastrophe began appearing on blogs soon after these photos appeared, and people all over the world learned about the events in London by reading the words and seeing the photos posted by bloggers.

The fact that these stories and images were being spread directly by individuals operating without the added filter of a reporter helped to make the crisis feel very immediate to people across the globe. When it comes to blogging, news often appears in a very personal context. This has the potential to be the beginning of an exciting new era of reporting, one that takes "New Journalism" to it's logical next step by putting the power to shape how the news is written and read directly into the hands of the public.

Many bloggers and cultural commentators who are champions of the weblog movement feel that this growing trend of individuals who getting their news from blogs is a good thing, because it makes the flow of information more democratic. By decentralizing the control of news, blogs allow more voices to enter the

field of debate about important current events. However, many people are adamantly opposed to the use of blogs as news outlets, and there are plenty of good arguments on this side of the debate. Unlike newspapers or television stations, few blogs have fact-checkers, and there is little attention paid to journalistic accountability on many blogs. This can lead to the rapid spread of misinformation, and more than one falsehood has taken the blogosphere by storm. The questions about whether blogging news as it happens is ethical or not are very complicated, but no matter where you stand on the topic of current events blogs you are almost sure to agree that this movement has the potential to revolutionize how modern people get their news.

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