Designing the future of the newspaper

An aggregator for online news that combines editorial sources with social media in order to provide overview and accessibility.

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Abstract

This paper is about the exploration of how to design an aggregator for online news that combines editorial credibility, a social media layer and a fluent interaction experience in order to provide overview and accessibility.

The aim of this thesis was to explore the design of the conventional newspaper in a digital format using the iPad as medium. The conventional newspaper is in trouble – more and more readers are moving to digital news – and we are struggling with which platform to use in the future, what content to fill it with and how this new media channel can be used. My ambition for this project was to explore, from a media production perspective, possible design solutions.

In the design process two questions were mailed out to individuals to investigate important qualities and behaviours from the conventional newspaper. There were also situated studies with ten individuals in their homes, including interviews and questionnaires, to get a deeper insight into how they read the news and to identify their behaviour and rituals while using the iPad as device.

The result of this project was an iPad application designed for those who are interested in following the news. There are two key functions that have been added to adjust the conventional newspaper to fit as an aggregator providing news online. The first one is editorial responsibility for social media content and the second that it can be used twenty-four hours a day.

In this thesis, I am proposing that the iPad can also be used in a social context and as a device for social experience, besides being a personal device. The design solution is an application which can be used for in depth-reading or in the periphery, adjustable according to which situation the person is in.

Keywords: aggregator, design, interaction, iPad, news, periphery
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1. Introduction

This work is about exploring how to design an aggregator for online news that combines editorial sources with social media in order to provide overview and accessibility. I have chosen this topic for my thesis because it covers many current interesting movements. The conventional newspaper is in trouble. More and more readers are moving to digital news. We are struggling with which platform to use in the future, what content to fill it with and how this new media channel will be used.

I will look at different issues regarding how to create a design solution from a design perspective. I will briefly touch on some of the most relevant issues to media development from a journalistic point of view, but it is not my main focus. My aim is to explore from a media production perspective possible designs solutions to improve the experience of reading news on an iPad.

Conventional newspapers, being the most powerful news service provider to mass audiences historically, are increasingly moving their services from paper to digital platforms. The New York Times publisher and chairman Arthur Sulzberger Jr. stated in a conference, the WAN-IFRA 9th. International Newsroom Summit in London in September 2010, “We will stop printing The New York Times sometime in the future”. Six months later, on 18th March, he announced in an e-mail to his subscribers that the decision had been made to start charging for reading the paper online, which was a first statement that he would live up to his word in the future. This was an historical moment, as ‘The Grey Lady’, as she is called, now 150 years old, is one of the most important newspapers in history.

There are, of course, thousands of publishers all over the world who are struggling with exactly the same challenge of what to do. The numbers are giving us a rather clear idea in which direction this is heading. For example, in America newspaper circulation overall fell nearly 9% in April 2010 in comparison to the previous year. http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/27/business/media/27audit.html. And it is relevant to be aware of these challenges businesses face when exploring the design of the future models for providing online news.

There are two major discussions about the situation for the moment. The first one is: How will the news publishing business manage to create new revenue models? In other words, how will they manage to change the movement of free access to information that is now ruling the Internet? What will the effect be of such a ground-breaking change when the day arrives and a leading newspaper like The New York Times moves their entire content over to the World Wide Web. What strategic plan must they have to get their readers to pay for their journalistic content, and will they succeed in breaking the ice, creating ripples on the water for other, less powerful, news publishing businesses? And does this mean that the Internet might be divided into two in the future – one paid and another that offers free access to information? What gaps will this create in society between who has access to knowledge?
The second discussion when we move from printed media to digital is how the profession of journalism will be able to adjust to these new changes and innovate itself as a profession. What is the role of the journalist in the future and what are the qualities the tradition of journalism on digital platforms. Harvard University has created its own lab, Nieman Journalism Lab (www.niemanlab.org) just trying to work out the role of journalism in the age of the Internet.

The aim of this thesis, as mentioned earlier, is not to go into great detail of trying to find solutions for the above questions. Instead, I will explore how we can improve the experience of reading news online, as we are already at this point. The Internet is booming with new solutions to read news online. For many of the conventional newspapers now moving over their business to digital media it will be a challenge to compete with specialist news producers who have been exploring the Internet for a decade or more. Because even if their content is of the highest quality, they are competing on totally different grounds – this is one of the things we will explore later on. On this new media platform you are not only competing on quality of content but also on user experience. On the other hand, conventional newspapers have a powerful history and an already established relationship with their readers.

I will also investigate what qualities and behaviours we can bring with us from the conventional newspaper and its rituals, exploring the iPad as a medium, and using interaction design as the tool.

Recent developments of Internet

In 2008, two-thirds of the Swedish population were regular users of the Internet and the number of users is constantly growing. But the reason that we have come to this point is not how it may appear at a first glance – that people all of a sudden took a greater interest in the Internet because of new and interesting happenings on the World Wide Web, that talk of the Internet has become much more present in our daily conversations, has taken a bigger part in our daily work, or has served as an actual working tool. The reason why this development has been possible, that we have come to the point where we are actually changing many of our behaviours, is that a tremendous amount of work has been going on behind the scenes for the last decade or two. It is the process of interaction between people and the development of technologies that has made it possible – work such as the labour and construction involved in developing fast and affordable broadband, wireless connections and the possibility to use the Internet from home. (Bergström, 2009)

We don’t really give thought to any of this development that has been going on backstage when we are using the Internet today unless the systems are not functioning.

But it has a huge affect on how we got where we are and what possibilities are open to us for the future when designing an aggregator for online news. The user experience has improved.
For example, the development of faster graphics that will probably have a huge future effect on the level of interaction, realtime movies that increase our awareness of events as they happen, and high resolution displays that make what we are viewing feel much more real as we are experiencing it. And what is about to happen is our getting closer to a digital future with no delays, making news in this medium even more relevant than ever. Virtual communication is thus becoming as habitual as our next-door neighbour.

One other major development that has completely changed how we use the Internet today, and had such a great influence and will continue to do so, was the work done by the mobile phone industry at the beginning of this century. Every mobile producer at that time was looking at finding the killer application that would take over the market. And it happened when the iPhone was launched in January 2007, making it clear that the future use of the web was usability – the interface of the mobile device itself, the screen (Goggin, 2009. West and Mace, 2010) – in combination with the affordable mobile broadband as mentioned earlier. Since then, the development of touchscreen devices has exploded, as has their use. We can clearly see how the development of mobile phone applications has exploded on the market, and how the artefacts have had a parallel development, with results such as the iPad and other reading tablets. And this may well be the platform where news publishers in the future will fight for their share of the market. When looking at this development it is not so surprising that the news publishing business is experiencing a recession. For example, in Sweden the mobile Internet had hardly increased in 2008 but more than doubled in 2009. And in a study from 2009 regarding how many used the Internet in their mobile, the result was 41% between the ages of 15 and 39, 35% between the ages of 40 and 49 years and 25% between the ages of 60 and 67 years. (Westlund, 2010)

A brief explanation of what the iPhone changed

iPhone product design had the standard features that other phones also had at that time, such as voice connectivity, calendaring, address book and e-mail. But the groundbreaking change was the touchscreen with a software-defined virtual keyboard for numeric and text input, instead of a physical keyboard or keypad. It introduced a larger screen than any other model on the market and was fully integrated with Apple’s market-leading iTunes store, enabling you to download audio and video entertaining content. Furthermore, it contained a version of Safari web browser, which Apple had developed for their personal computers earlier. The touch-driven interface features improved the browsing experience and made it easier to explore the Internet on the small screen. With this, Apple had moved the experience closer to the experience you have with your personal computer. (West et al., 2010)
The use of Internet

We know there are varied target groups in society that use the Internet differently. The main differences are between the younger and the older generation and between individuals with higher and lower education. Individuals with higher education use the Internet more frequently. And among the younger generation eight out of ten are regular users, while only three out of ten among the older generation are regular users. However, the growing segment is the senior users between 65 and 69 years of age, many of whom now have free time to explore the Internet. They are traditionally the conventional newspaper readers, but have had some experience of using the Internet at a working age. More interesting is that 50% of all Internet users in Sweden go online to get information about news. (Bergström, 2009)

The iPad

The iPad is the computer tablet from Apple. It was launched in April 2010. The second generation of the iPad, the iPad 2, was available for sale in March 2011. It is marketed mainly as a platform for audio and visual media such as books, periodicals, movies, music, games and web content. The size is between a contemporary smartphone and a laptop computer. It has, like the iPhone, a multitouch display and uses a Wi-Fi data connection to browse the Internet, load stream and media and install software. Some models also have 3G data networks.

Only 3% of the population in Sweden owns a reading tablet according to a survey by TNS SIFO’s survey Orvesto Consumer 2011:1 with 15,000 respondents aged between 15 and 79 years in 2011. And how many of these are using it in relation to their work we do not know.

Reasons for using the iPad as a platform

The iPad is already introduced on the market as an artefact designed for reading books and creating applications to provide news. It has a well-designed format and is very mobile, weighing only 680 grams. The iPad also has great potential to design features that will enchant the area of interaction and usability.

Social media

We see a trend that more people visit the Internet to get news. What is an interesting but also a challenging factor in relation to this, is that when we study individuals reading their news online today they often find their source of information from more then one news provider. Many of these new channels of information can be found in what is called social media: different platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, user-generated videos and video blogging. These are different forms of media channels, where individuals share their knowledge, facts and opinions about a specific topic or news.
“Social media refers to the set of new media that enable social interaction between participants, often through the sharing of media. Although all media are in some ways social, the term ‘social media’ came into common usage in 2005 as term referencing a central component of what is frequently called ‘Web 2.0’ or ‘the social web’. All these terms refer to the layering social content. Popular genres of social media include instant messages, blogs, social network sites, video- and photo-sharing sites.” (Ito et al., 2009)

This is a new era, a new form of democracy; anyone who wants to make a statement or spread the word can do so today via these medias, and anyone who wants to make a comment about anything said or reported can do so as well. A worldwide on-going interaction machine, in other words.

Social media use and blog writing are a widespread activity on the Internet scene today and you could say that it has become an integral part of our society. Facebook, Twitter, and Blogs are about making connections on a one-to-many basis. But what is important to remember is that it is the younger generation that is the highly frequent user, and this may be true for some time. Another gap in this picture is that, once again, as for the use of Internet in general, it is more widespread among individuals with higher education. (Bergström, 2009)

This new way of reading news online demands a lot more from the user compared to reading the conventional newspaper, where the editor and journalists present the reader with already selected information. But there is a big difference between news being provided by a non-professional in a social media channel or computer generated, compared to news being provided by a journalist having examined the material and made a judgement as to its relevance. This does not mean that one is better than the other. It simply means they have different qualities, and it is important to be clear about how these two can weigh differently when giving a clear picture of a situation or a debate.

During my research interviewing newsreaders, which I will return to later on in more detail, I have come across more than one person expressing remarks such as, “I will never read the newspaper again. I get all my news straight from the source.” What they mean is that they have created a world of friends, links and news feeds with automatic functions that supply them daily with what they have decided is relevant information. This also means that these individuals have reframed themselves as not only news consumers, but they have now also become like reviewers or editors (or chosen others to be their editors) and maybe even news producers. They now participate in determining what is relevant or not. A task absolutely possible now, with information from all over the world that is easily accessible and many tools, which make it easy to create our personalised portals and create a world of selected information. But the question is: Do the public have the time to become their own editors?
“Although channels and supply multiplied, we are unable to consume more, because time frames are the same – we cannot stop working to listen more to radio or frequently skip dinner for TV viewing. For the aggregate media use, this has meant an increase in fragmented, we pay more channels less and less time.” (Bergström, 2005)

Something else to keep in mind when designing an aggregator for online news is what the actual level of interaction is. The fact is that the most common activity of interaction today on the Internet is still a sort of monologue where the interaction is more between the user and the technology, and not in a social context. For example, moving between pages on so-called hyperlinks or preset applications commenting on features. (Bergström, 2009)

Internet user interests

As the technology is changing so fast, one would imagine that we as individuals are also changing just as fast. But this is not the case. It is rather clear that our subject of interest when reading news stays on the same level. In other words, people have rather stable reading habits. The vast majority are interested in reading, in this order: local news, accidents and crimes, radio and television materials and domestic news. The only section, which is showing a growing interest in the area of news, is the entertainment section. But bear in mind that when asking large groups of individuals what they consider most relevant when reading the news, we do not know the difference between what readers think is important compared to what they actually read. And there is also a certain amount of prestige involved in expressing what you consider to be most relevant. But to make the picture concise, the conclusion is that people in general find news more relevant to them the closer they are, both on a personal level as well as geographically. (Strid, 2008)

Users trust in news and willingness to pay

Even though we are now changing our behaviours in how we consume news, for example, reading from more than one source and moving over to digital platforms, the statistics show that our trust and confidence in conventional news media channels, such as the nine o'clock news or the morning paper, are as great as ever. The general confidence in Swedish media emanates from factors such as ownership and editorial profile, rather than their judgement of their actual profile. (Weibull, 2009)

One might think that this feeling of wanting to trust conventional media has something to do with our Swedish history, where we as a people generally have greater respect for authority compared to many other countries. What is even more surprising is that statistically this confidence in conventional news media seems to be influenced remarkably little by the on-going changes in the media industry.
What is also interesting is that the more you visit a media, the more confidence you have in it (Weibull, 2007), which means we should design our solution in a way that we have frequent meetings.

One major issue for designing aggregator providing news for the future is that when asked, 80% of the population in Sweden are not willing to pay for receiving news on the Internet. But at the same time, 80% of the population also state that they think it is important that there is a news archive available on websites. Half of the population thinks that it is fairly important for news sites to be free of ads, and it is age that divides public opinion in terms of core features on news sites. Young people can agree on having adverts as long as they continue to have free news. Features that users find relevant are news archives, videos, commenting and chat options. For older people the most essential is to have ad-free news sites. And in case of links to social media there are no clear age differences. (Bergström, 2010)

But let’s turn this question around and step half a decade forward. Imagine that the rest of the publishing industry will follow the lead of the New York Times in the future by going digital and charging for their content (which means that the Internet has been divided into one paid and one public section), I am fairly sure that people no matter what age will have changed their minds about what they are prepared to pay for – humans throughout history have always been willing to pay for what gives them personal value or status.

Social Media and news

Why is social media such a breakthrough in relation to the news? There are, of course, many reason for this, but besides the enormous social potential this medium has, it has also got a lot to do with speed, with getting the information as it happens, in realtime. For example, when major news in the world happens, such as catastrophic events or political conflicts, newspapers all around the world send their journalists to these places so that they are able to give researched reports from the actual places. But what has happened with the possibilities of communicating via social media, and is changing the conventional way of reporting news, is that the news starts spreading just minutes after the event has happened. This is because the public is already at the actual place when things happen and they use their mobile phones to write, take photos or film the situation, which they then put online (via social media) to spread the news. Of course, this is interesting, as it creates a sense that you are experiencing the situation almost at the same time as it happens, which makes the individual connected directly to the event.

The producers in social media channels

We know as described above that the users of the Internet, the consumers of media, are increasingly also becoming the producers and this is having a large influence on the industry of conventional news media production companies.
But what is not completely obvious to the eye when viewing the ongoing news feeds displayed on the Internet is that it is produced by a minority of users that account for a disproportionately large part of the content. (Bergström, 2008)

This is an interesting fact as all larger communities and social networks rely on these users to share their content to function. So if the general public are not the average producer and we are going to design an aggregator providing news and combing journalism with a social layer, we have to find a way to involve these participants who bring information to life. These leading groups in social media are sometimes referred to as tribes.

“Broadly speaking, a tribe consist of a relatively small group of people who know each other and are willing to do things for each other, secure in the knowledge that their altruism will be reciprocated. This sets tribal systems apart from large-scale anonymous social navigation mechanism such as the oft-cited ‘People who bought X also bought Y” Amazon feature.” (Löwgren et al., 2009)

We have seen similar patterns as described above in other media. Where opinions are being influenced or ruled by people with most access to media and how individuals who are having a more literate understanding of the media content, are the ones who explain and diffuse the content to others. The two-step communication theory, also known as the Multistep flow model, was first introduced by the sociologist Paul Lazarsfeld in 1944, and was later elaborated by Elihu Katz and Lazarsfeld in 1955. There are similarities in this theory to social media, as in how the tribe exchange knowledge within the group, which shapes the message (opinion) to the public who follow.

“If word-of-mouth is so important, and if word-of-mouth specialists are widely dispersed, and if these specialists are more exposed to the media than the people whom they influence, then perhaps ideas often flow from radio and print to opinion leaders and from these to less active sections of the population.” (Katz, 1957)

Also important to know is that it is mainly the younger generation who are the producers of social media content. We also know that women are more active in social activities, while men are more involved in discussions and strategic games. (Bergström, 2008)

The graph below (Bergström, 2009) does not have the latest numbers of how the public interact with news websites but it presents a good picture of what activities are prioritized. The most important is to read articles and on second place comes answering questions. As you can see in the graph, other activities and interactions such as writing your own text, sharing pictures, chatting and blogs are not very widespread.

Another possible reason for the facts presented in the graph is that even if the consumers influence is growing, the media producers are not that willing to create applications that gives the user too much control. (Thurman, 2008) A reason for this might be the legal responsibility of the journalist. (Bergström, 2009)
It is clear that the public are beginning to view social media as part of news. The comment feature, for example, has grown considerably. Many news providers offer visitors today the opportunity to comment on journalistic content. About one-third of the Swedish population thinks this is an important feature and that it should be on all news sites. One-fifth thinks it is important to have links to different types of social media sites and allow users to contribute with texts and pictures. One in ten think it is important to have the opportunity to chat on the news website. (Bergström, 2010)

Time restrictions and habits

It has long been established within media research that even if we are now overloaded with Internet news and entertainment we do not spend more time consuming it. The amount of hours we spend per week on media remains unchanged. For example, the amount of time we spend devoted to reading the newspaper has not changed over the years – those who read the morning paper take approximately half an hour a day to do so today as well as 25 years ago. (Strid, 2008). Furthermore, research studies have found that the habit of reading the news does not easily change, and research studies have also suggested that the habitual behaviour becomes even stronger when there are more options to choose from various media channels. It is very difficult to change habits that have become routine. (LaRose & Eastin, 2004)

We are individuals on this planet, and as much as we would like to change our behaviour sometimes, the hours of the day are still the same, which makes it difficult to change. We still have to do all the activities that are part of our lives such as working, food shopping and eating. We cannot stop doing one thing for another just because the media supply has increased. The result of the enormous amount of information we are exposed to every day is that our media use has
become much more fragmented. We pay less attention to each channel. (Sternvik, 2010) This explains the frustrations expressed by some of the individuals I have interviewed – concern over no longer being able to grasp the whole picture of the news they read in a day. The interviewees who felt this way told me that they received a lot of news in a day but little in-depth information – in reference to what they thought they gained when reading the conventional newspaper. However, there were no hints that any of the interviewees wished to move back to reading only the conventional newspaper.

“I am worried that I don’t get the whole picture of the news I read.”

Another trend relating to how we perceive news online and a very important one when designing an online news provider, is that media consumption, i.e. the use of media content, are getting more relocated to a use outside working hours. (Sternvik, 2009) The boundaries when we use media are also being blurred: that is, what media we use and when we use them. For example, it used to be most common that we watched the news on television after working hours. Today, we can watch news on WebTV from our PC during working hours. (Andersson, 2006)

This means that we have to design an application that does not demand more time than the individuals are willing to give in relation to where they are situated. For example, home or work, as well as a design that fits the need to be used in other hours other than the morning, as is the case with a conventional newspaper.

This brings us to another major change and challenge for the news publishing industry. When moving the conventional newspaper over digital platforms we opened up to be accessible to receive news twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. This is an amazing opportunity for the news publishing business, but it demands strategic design decisions especially as the revenue of online newspaper magazines at the moment is not the most lucrative. Work costs money. So if we are going to update news as they happen it will cost. And how can these conventional newspaper magazines compete with online social media news that automatically generates updates from everywhere? Another question is how often, and should they provide updates with the Internet open twenty-four hours a day?

Looks matters

One reflection in my studies is that it is not enough to make a news aggregator that has the right functions or content. The trend shows if we look at the top 25 most popular downloads, people download new applications that looks good and feels great. This trend can also be related to ‘the talk of the town’. This means that many who are active in social media contexts share their thoughts on application in their social network in perspective of how they want to be perceived by their surrounding. Hence, it is important that the application looks and feels great. Otherwise it will be hard to compete.
2. Existing products and services

Even if the medium is new there are already a huge amount of portals, websites and media applications that are designed to fit the new demand for reading news online. And the medium is rapidly changing. Below are some examples of references regarding how we build the future.

Apps

Flipboard
An iPad application that Apple named the iPad app of the year in 2010. This application looks at what content your friends are sharing on Twitter and Facebook and reformats it into a digital, interactive social magazine. You also have an option to select specific area of interest and the application will providing you with news related to that.

Cofounder and CEO Mike McCue said in an interview with the journalist Nicholas Carlson for the business site http://www.businessinsider.com, in December 2010.

“The most interesting thing we learned is how Flipboard plans to make money. Flipboard plans to actually show more of publisher’s content, advertising against it, and then share revenues. Mike says it will increase publisher’s digital revenues by a factor of ten from what they’re currently doing with banner ads.”

Another quote from the Cofounder of Flipboard in relation to what inspired him to design the application.

“I wonder if I could design a Web-like experience that was sort of rooted in the timeless principles of print, and bring the beautiful photography, the really well done typography, layout and graphic design but have that same sort of power and richness and dynamic of the web.”
The interaction design in Flipboard is simple and very clear to understand. They have used many features similar to how you interact with the iPad, as in the language of Apple. By doing this they have copied a familiar behaviour that makes you as user feel comfortable. (http://flipboard.com)

**Pulse**
Pulse redefines news, and information from traditional sources, blogs and social network. It creates storybars and fills them with content from your chosen sources.

The creators Akshay Kothari and Ankit Gupta developed the application in a ten-week course at Stanford University, USA. They say on their website that their inspiration for creating the application comes from the frustration of the news reading experience on mobile devices. (http://www.alphonsolabs.com)

**Tweetmag**
Tweetmag is an application built to offer a magazine-style view of articles and links people are tweeting about, both your own Twitter but also an outer stream with articles and media that people are tweeting about most. It is an application that has created a personal editorial team out of people, list and tags you follow on the web. (http://www.tweetmagapp.com)
**Flud**

Flud is an application that caters the content. It registering your interests and creates a selection that mirrors the topics in the articles. This means that you are being presented by a content that has been personalised to your personal profile.

You can view 30 different chosen feeds of articles at once. You can also view the web and watch videos within the app alongside with the article you are reading.

(https://www.theflud.com)

**Reeder**

Reeder is a Google reader application. It creates news from your personal RSS feeds. It is integrated with Google Reader, which means that it will sync your subscriptions with your Google account.

(https://reederapp.com/)
Zite
Zite is again an application that registers what you are browsing, finds similar topics on the web and creates your personal magazine. They state on their website that the application gets smarter the more you use it! A good feature is that you can open URLs without having to leave the application.
(http://zite.com)
The web and social media aggregators

Digg
A web browser supplying you with news, videos and pictures on the web. It will provide you with a selection of news provided from your web community. You can also share your content. The articles are spread among the community depending on how many diggs they have.
(http://digg.com/news)

Reddit
An aggregator of news that people are sharing by interacting with the article by voting ‘like’ or ‘dislike’. In this way some articles becomes more prominent than others.
(http://www.reddit.com/)
Dayriffer
An aggregator providing daily news and current events. It is created by Andrew Postman and is basically a one man’s personal news aggregator, which he shares with the rest of the world. It provides you with news, information, opinion, images and video.

“It’s an aggregator with attitude; an attempt to have a human being select the stories of the day that are most interesting, meaningful, counterintuitive, provocative, odd, moving, funny, with commentary reflecting a certain sensibility, accompanied by a longer, daily ‘riff’. I don’t know why I put riff inside quotation marks but I did. So be it.” (Andrew Postman)

An interesting insight with Dayriffer is the possibility that one person can create a magazine out of his personal interests that looks like many other professional magazines on the web.
(http://dayriffer.com)
Paper Li
Paper Li is helping the users organize and curate their own content from Twitter into a ‘daily’ newspaper. It extracts tweets and includes the URLs and pulls the content from blog spots, newspaper articles, Flickr, Youtube etc. It looks and feels like a regular newspaper online. You as user have to personalize which news you would like to receive.
(http://paper.li)

Popurls
Popurls, as the name suggests, is an aggregator of several other aggregators of news. It creates an overview of what the most popular stories are at the moment, from Reddit, Dayriffer, Digg, Twitter, Flickr, Metafilter, YouTube, New York Times and many more. They also present a selection of ‘hot’ articles related to topics. This site creates great overview of news feeds from some of the most relevant news providers in the world. The negative side of the site is that nothing pops out. It has about the same typography. The impression becomes monotonically and does not inspire for reading. I miss the well thought out typography and layout principles that the conventional newspaper uses, which makes the experience of reading interesting and challenging.
And what is the relevance for creating a visually psychological display of information? Studies show that it is highly important to create a layout that is in balance with the reading experience. Evidence suggests that pictures, such as layout, have a positive effect on how readers build mental models of contextual content. (Hyönä et al., 1999)

“What conclusions can be drawn from the present results concerning eye movements and newspaper reading? Generally speaking this study shows that eye movements actually are sensitive and responsive to various design factors that are applied in building the graphical layout of newspapers. Consequently, reading behaviour can be affected by newspaper design. Under these circumstances the critical concern might be to ensure that reading behaviour is affected in the right manner. That is, eye movement behaviour should be affected in way that is meaningful for the reader; all influences on eye movements are not necessarily beneficial.” (Holmberg, 2004)

Newspapers

DN+
The largest conventional newspaper in Sweden has published the iPad Application DN+. The application includes most of the editorial content as in the paper version, but you have to pay to read it. The graphic design is similar to a ‘weekend magazine’ in relation to layout, images and typography. They have a lot of focus on visual storytelling including, picture stories, interactive graphics, video and sound clips, links and integrated live html-content.
The Daily
First news magazine produced and designed exclusively for the iPad.

“The Daily is a beautiful, multimedia-rich daily magazine. But I expected more from a product with such an enormous budget, produced in collaboration with Apple’s own developer team. Still, I could have forgiven all had the quality of the content itself been better, if it had offered one item I couldn’t have found for free, and more intelligently written, on the web.”

(http://mashable.com/2011/02/02/the-daily-review/)

It looks like a glossy monthly magazine. It has own produced material and highly saturated photographs. You can share articles to Facebook and Twitter that non-subscribers can view on the web. You can also leave comments. But you cannot copy text, as it is not selectable, which makes it difficult to share content to social networks.
3. The design challenge

The conventional newspaper has to reinvent itself

There is a need in this time in history to reinvent the conventional newspaper and the role of the journalist: the history of the newspaper from its beginnings as a handwritten piece of paper, to the letterpress, and now in digital format. With the development of mobile Internet and touchscreens, in combination with advanced technology such as fast broadband, we could out cut the steps involving machinery for print on paper and delivery to homes and instead everything could be digital.

My job is to explore the design of the conventional newspaper in a digital format using the iPad as artefact to create a news application that combines editorial credibility, a social media layer and a fluent interaction experience.

4. The design process

I have divided my design process into three different sections. To begin with, I will explore different work and thoughts in relationship to the future of media. As a second step, I will do field studies. Finally, I will make sketches and reflect on my findings.
4.1 Reflections on the future of media

In the book Designing Media by Bill Moggridge there is an interview with Paul Saffo, a forecaster, essayist and teacher at Stanford University. Their discussion is about the value of paper among other things. There is one part in which Saffo describes how he uses a leather-bound journal instead of a laptop or PDA to write down his notes. One reason for using pen and paper instead of a computer is that he finds using his journal much easier and more accessible when taking notes. He explains that he thinks he will find his way back to these notes in the future much more easily than ‘the digital files that have rotted away into a cloud of random electronics’.

What I find interesting in reflections on this argument is the value of the conventional newspaper when it has been used. We do not consider the newspaper something we would like to keep on our bookshelves. It has very little value to us the day after we have read it. I believe we would very much like to store our news in a cloud of random electronics. We throw away our newspaper after we have read it. Old news is no news. And almost anyone who has some knowledge of the Internet can reach back to an old news item if they wish to. Not to mention the amount of trees, time and money that could be saved in production and delivery if this was the development. Which means that, besides the fact that many jobs would be reassessed, I believe digital platforms are a well-suited medium for providing news.

Another interesting comment in the interview with Suffer is the fact that most people do not easily participate on the Internet unless it is quick and easy. They give Wikipedia as an example, which has only a small percentage of people actually writing information. This is similar to what was described in the introduction of this thesis, which is that only a very small percentage of all users are actually active producers of social media. So when designing an aggregator to provide news we have to figure out a way to present social media content, if it is not representative of a variety of people.

Moggridge also talks in his book about the fact that we have reached a time in history where we are able to create media more or less by ourselves by only having to use the programs in our personal computers. People have become their own media producers. He interviews people who have taken advantage of this development and managed to create innovative media that rely on the crowd contributing the information. In the same way, many news providers online today use social media to fill content. What would be my angle to present social media in my design proposal? Further in the book Designing Media there is an interview with Jimmy Wales, the founder of Wikipedia. Wikipedia is an online social community, where content is being created by people sharing their interests and passion and writing about it. As how the founder describes it, the success of Wikipedia is:
“...the unique combination of user-generated content, volunteer quality control based on both human judgement and algorithmic indicators, and a open voting structure with hierarchical leadership.”

He speaks about how we have been designing usability on the web by trying to design what people expect, how people can find things and how they will move.

“People edit Wikipedia because it’s interesting, they meet other people to either make friends or enemies with, and they enjoy the bond of sharing and comparing. The real question about community design is, “What is it that people are going to be doing that they’ll find fun, and how do we make it interesting?”

What Wikipedia has done on top of these standards and principles for navigation is to add a layer that allows social interaction among people. This social interaction has been successful because it has recognized that how the software is designed has great influence on the social norms and rules that come out of the interaction process. This means I have to have an open mind about how the software is designed and so there is room for social interaction.

Further on in the book there is an interview with Bruce Nussbaum, managing director at Newsweek, about how he moved the magazine online. Nussbaum explains that in publications like Newsweek it is normal to use professional journalists to create material. But how he, in contrast to this tradition, along with former Wired employee Jessie Scanlon, launched an entire channel creating an open source model using partners, not their own journalists, to bring in content and links. It was a complete revolution at the time and it worked. Today, more than half a decade later, they still use the same model. Nussbaum explains how he could create trust with the audience:

“We will tell you what is important in this sphere because we know you. You can trust us.” We took this to a different level and called it curating. This idea has begun to influence the rest of BusinessWeek and mainstream journalism.

One of Nussbaum’s more significant insight is that people want to feel that they are actively engaged, that they are part of a community. They want to be participants and have active conversations. Journalism online should be very different from journalism in the printed world. When you produce journalism for online media it should be interactive and engaging. You should be able to comment on stories, to comment on the comments. Videos are also a great tool to bring conversations alive.

Something else I found interesting in Designing Media is an interview with Rich Archuleta, CEO of Plastic Logic. He studied electric engineering and is known for defining new products and business innovation. The question he raises is not about content management as discussed above, but about how we will want to interact in the future depending on different situations and needs.
“We’ve been thinking about not just book reading, but newspapers, magazines, user-generated material like emails, Microsoft Word documents, and PDF’s for things like reference manuals or any type of document. How do you want to interact with that on an electronic device that is mobile and that you can have with you all the time and enjoy in different experiences? How do you build a user interface that some people refer to it as ‘sit-back reading’, where you’re really going to immerse yourself into the material and read for a long period of time, versus ‘lean-forward reading’, where you want to review things and switch between documents and maybe add some annotation and be able to use that in a collaborative work manner with others.”

When I read the text above I begin to wonder how the solution I have in mind will look in all its variety – short texts, long essays, images, movies, blogs, twitters, sound, etc. How can I fit in all this content and make it work, considering that people are in very different body positions and different places when they use the artefact. It makes me think how smart the conventional newspaper is. But also how great its limitations are in comparison to the pliability of the digital format.

In the book there is also an interview with Arthur Sulzberger Jr who I mentioned in the introduction. He began as a publisher at the New York Times in 1992 and is today chairman. Sulzberger strongly believes content is king and believes that you create a quality audience with quality journalism. He tells us that when the radio came it was seen as a threat to the newspaper and the same happened when television arrived. But he also explains that Internet was the first media that took back the written word; radio and television both took it away.

Ira Glass, also interviewed in the book, is a reporter and host for several programs. He talks about the web as:

“...more like radio than it is like most things, because you’re sitting there alone and somehow it’s close to you. I think the reason it works over the Internet is because there’s something in the intimacy of it that’s like the intimacy of Facebook. As a character on the radio I don’t seem further away than your friend on Facebook. I don’t seem like an official sort of announcer. I just seem like somebody who happened to get a radio show.”

I like this. He pinpointed the relationship you have with your screen and the interaction that takes place between you. It also makes me think that the distance between you and your screen – the space between you and your iPad, personal computer or mobile device is the same as when you are standing talking to a person.

Insight/gaps:
- We do not want to keep old news. Therefore the “cloud” is a good place to save news.
- It has to be easy and quick for the user to generate social media content.
- The rules created by the software have great influence.
- Open source works in journalism.
- Having someone curating content for you creates trust.
- Journalism for online media should be interactive and engaging.
- Online journalism should have the option to be commented on.
- Designing for mobile devices is challenging because the situations you use them in are so different.
- Content is king.

Why read news

We read the news because we are trying to understand the world, to do business and to make sensible decisions. Reading the news also connects us with people in our social network. By reading the news we are able to have water-cooler discussion with friends, colleagues and family about what is going on in society. In the past, when the conventional newspaper had many readers, we usually read the same news, and could therefore have discussions about the same topics. This provided us with a feeling of being part of a bigger picture rather than being isolated in our own private sphere.

But people are individuals, and of course, also want to read news that is tied to their personal interests. This possibility to personalize information has been well designed in, for example, the iPad applications Flipboard and Zite. In December 2010, Flipboard was listed as one of the top apps in the news category, which shows people’s interest in personalized news.

Insight/gaps:
- Reading news provides people with a tool to have conversations with others.
- People like to read about their own personal interests.

Editorial credibility and a social layer

As I mentioned earlier, I would like to create an aggregator providing both editorial credibility as well as a social layer.

I believe that there is a need to combine social media and journalistic content when you move the conventional newspaper over to a digital platform. Social media is the news. It is a reflection of the popular vote of activities, thoughts and debates around the world. It reflects the trends and tendencies in society. It is also a very immediate source of information and a valuable tool when designing a medium updated and available to the public twenty-four hours a day.

An overview of news is what the conventional newspaper provides. There is no doubt that creating overview is a relevant feature in designing the aggregator. News also has to be accessible. Access to information is the key to participation in society and can be considered a fundamental human right.
How could one combine the two worlds – social media and journalism – into one platform to provide overview and accessibility?
What possibilities exist to innovate the role of the journalist?
How could one create a sense of the journalist being both?

- Examiner of news (the journalist’s traditional role).
- Curator of Social Media.

An example of an individual doing interesting work in the field of providing overview and accessibility in social media is the strategist Andy Carvin. He curates Twitter feeds as well as traditional wire services and has more than 32,000 followers on Twitter.

"I admit that I don’t know the answer to things and see users as potential experts and eyewitnesses. In some ways what I’m doing is not that different from a broadcast host doing a breaking live story with a producer in one ear, talking to pundits and all the while anchoring the coverage, but rather than producers I have followers." (http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2011/mar/14/andy-carvin-tunisia-libya-egypt-sxsw-2011)

Since the start of the Tunisian uprising in December 2010, Carvin has been serving as a one-man broadcast channel-cum-newswire on events in the Middle East. He has a network of blogger contacts in the region that he uses as sources of information. But what sets him apart is that he asks his followers to help establish the accuracy of the content.

It is the social interaction between people that is the key to creating social networks and can provide me with a social layer. I also know, however, that only a very small group of people actually contribute to social media and that people contribute only if they feel engaged. My conclusion is that I do not believe I can create a social layer that can be developed sufficiently by only using the readers of the newspaper. They will, of course, have a great influence on the social media layer. But I do not think they alone will manage to keep it at a sufficient level. It has to be created by the journalists’ social network. We must take advantage of the knowledge of the journalist who knows how to judge material and make selections that create an objective vision of a news situation, to give him or her the role of examiner/curator of relevance in social media.

Insight/gaps:
- There is great potential in combining social media with journalism.

The mental model versus the conceptual model

The content and history of our encounters with life and its experiences is what creates our personal story and unique history. These unique histories are what we bring to our next experience, thus creating another new experience that is unique to each the person.
The point I am trying to make is that creating experiences is complex and when we now move many of our services, pleasures, social connections etc. into simulated worlds and create design and experiences for digital media, we must take into consideration the difference between our mental model and our conceptual model.

A mental model represents a person’s thought process for how something works (i.e., a person’s understanding of the surrounding world). Mental models are based on incomplete facts, past experiences, and even intuitive perceptions. They help shape actions and behaviour, influence what people pay attention to in complicated situations, and define how people approach and solve problems. (Carey, 1986)

This mental model versus the conceptual model translated in a digital environment would be:

“In the field of user interface design, a mental model refers to the representation of something — the real world, a device, software, etc. — that the user has in mind. It is a representation of an external reality. Users create mental models very quickly, often before they even use the software or device. Users’ mental models come from their prior experience with similar software or devices, assumptions they have, things they’ve heard others say, and also from their direct experience with the product or device.” (Weinschenk, 2010)

We should not be fooled into thinking that we can copy what we have in our physical world into the virtual world and imagine it will work. We cannot, for example, copy a newspaper in its traditional form and think that it will work in a digital format. The quiet moment, sitting with a cup of freshly brewed coffee early in the morning; the ritual of the daily routine of doing something at the same time, at the same speed every day can not be replaced. As we have read earlier, behaviours do not change that easily. We have to think in a new way and create completely new experiences that are designed for the actual medium, place and situation: i.e. conceptual models.

“...if the product’s conceptual model doesn’t match the user’s mental model, then the user will find the product hard to learn and use. The same result is when the designers of the conceptual model didn’t take the user’s mental model into account then it is highly likely that the product will be hard to learn and use. And if there are multiple user groups, as in what I am designing for, and the conceptual model is designed to match just one mental model, then the other users will find the device hard to learn and use.” (Weinschenk, 2010)

If we relate the above information about the conceptual model versus the mental model, there are big differences within the target group. One part of our users has been brought up with reading the conventional newspaper and relying on the journalist for providing them with relevant information.
The other part, a growing group of users born in a later generation, has been born into a world where news is not necessarily perceived as something you get from just one source, but something you come across because your friends found it relevant and shared it with you – so called ‘tribe sharing’.

This means one of our greatest challenges in designing the interface and the interactions is that it must fit both younger as well as older generations.

Insight/gaps:
- We have to match the mental model with the conceptual mode.
- There is a gap between how the younger and the older generation access and perceive news.

Habits and rituals

Another challenge I face in my work designing an aggregator for online news is the possibility that the medium will be used 24 hours a day, with constant news updates. Thus, reading news online will not only change how we read, but also *when we read it*. How can we design something that fits all situations?

What are the new rituals for reading news online? One of the new rituals is the physical activity of typing in an URL once or a couple of times a day. Scenario: You wake up. You go to the kitchen to prepare breakfast. You put the bread in the toaster and place your iPad on the kitchen table. You pull your thumb over the screen of the device. A sense of pleasure washes over as you are being presented with the latest news in realtime.

Below is a graph from the website ReadItLater who did an analysis on which period during the day we mainly use the iPad.

I have interpreted possible scenarios from the graph above to get an image of how we use the electronic device.
- The graph peaks in the morning, which probably means you want to get a quick update on major news.
– A very small peak at nine, which could be when you just arrive at work, before you get into your daily work.
– Back after lunch. Checking what news has happened before getting your head back into work.
– A peak in the afternoon, just before finishing work.
– Major peak from eight to ten after you have finished housework.

Another trend we know from the same article is that we save articles and links to read later.

Insight/gaps:
– A study of users may provide information about behaviours and rituals while using the iPad.

Reflection on the experience of trust and authenticity

Many of us are privileged to have been born into a world open for experiences to embrace over a lifetime. A whole world containing thousands of encounters with music, nature, birth, friendships, love, travel, art, history, sports, politics etc. The list is endless. Just think about a regular bicycle ride and what amazing senses are connected with a simple trip to the supermarket. You might feel the wind stroking your hair, or a cold breeze on your skin that makes your body shiver. Memories encountering from watching the surrounding while you bike, and after you finished your ride, the rewarding physical feeling in your body when the endorphins have been released and you feel refreshed and happy. All this is real. Real experiences. You trust them because you know they are real and you know that because you feel it directly connected to your senses.

If something feels fake or does not fit with our mental model of the situation, we would automatically opt out of the situation. The elimination of what we consider to be true and relevant works the same in digital media as in real life.

A designer who I find inspiring and who has managed to create interactive digital experiences that feel true and authentic is the artist Jonathan Harris. In the project We Feel Fine, he collected for a period of three years personal blogs and sentences on the Internet that summed up to a database of twelve million individual sentences. With this information he visualized a portrait of the emotions of the World Wide Web.
On his own website he writes (http://www.number27.org/):

“I believe in technology, but I think we have to make it more human. I believe that the Internet is becoming a planetary meta-organism, but that it is up to us to guide its evolution, and to shape it into a space we actually want to inhabit – one that can understand and honour both the individual human and the human collective, just like real life does. That is the work I do.”

How can we make the Internet more human? How do you create trust on the web? How do I know that the information and knowledge I have received from all different kinds of sources has given me a relevant picture of the situation in which I am interested? Is it the same value for me as reader to follow news in a Twitter feed everyday as in reading the daily paper newspaper? I find it interesting how Bruce Nussbaum managing director at Newsweek managed to create a whole news channel using external partners and not using his own journalists. How he managed to gain loyal readers when he presented Newsweek as curator of information.

We want to read news that we can identify ourselves with. When we identify ourselves with what the journalist is writing we feel connected. If we could design an aggregator that presents editorial credibility by journalism and combines with a social, which most often are closer to
the source, and use realtime movies to increase the awareness of events as they happen, would we not then create the sense of the user being able to identify with what he or she reads?

Facts are that our daily consumption of news is becoming more and more fragmented. The world has at least as much misery and conflicts, as in past centuries and our whole entire planet is under massive threat. How can we possibly believe that we want more non-personal floods of information in our lives?

Newsweek is one example that has managed to create faithful readers. They managed to produce an entirely new product by using their own brand to create trust and thus faithful readers. Some news magazine worth mentioning who managed to create faithful readers by offering editorial credibility is http://motherjones.com, http://www.newstatesman.com, http://www.thenation.com and the Swedish version http://www.fokus.se. These news providers present news as in relevant reflections to what is going on in our society and political movements in the world. Their readers most probably build a relationship with the magazines and their journalists over time because of trust and quality in what was written. Can we not use this thought of believing that relevant content actually can create loyal readers, who might be willing to pay for reading professional journalistic articles?

And should the future of the conventional newspapers be more like these magazines? Not as in the past mainly providing the latest (because today anyone can find the latest news on the web from hundreds of news providers. And most probably this alone isn’t enough to create loyal readers anymore), but as a news provider presenting editorial credibility around debates and trends in society.

Insight/gaps:
- We have to seek to make the Internet more human.
- Editorial credibility is powerful.

Sites and applications in which I find inspiration

**New York Times Chrome**
Google Chrome is a web browser developed by Google. The web browser gives you the option to choose a layout in which you would like to view the news. For example, you can choose only to view images or just reading the headlines without images etc.

Insight/gaps:
- An experience that feels personalized does not necessarily have to include that the users select their own generated content. The feeling of personalisation can also be achieved by how the users wish to experience something in that moment. For example, if you would like to experience the news reading, listening or viewing it.
The Guardian Eyewitness iPad application

Great photographs of places and situation where the photojournalist has captured a moment in time. I am thrilled how much information can be told in just one image. One feature in the application is that you can flip the comment text describing the photograph to a Pro tip.

“The photographer has positioned himself in front of the crowd to gain full view of the scene and used a short depth of field to create the point of focus.”

“A lower viewpoint might have given the figures a more interesting background and context.”

Insight/gaps:
- The pro tip describes an action or a thought of the photographer that creates a feeling of authenticity.
- The use of high-chromed images on the web is nearly unbeatable to create powerful news. This is a tool the iPad app the Daily has taken advantage of.
The Wired iPad application

The Wired iPad application looks simple and is as easy to use as it looks. You scroll down and sideways. You can interact with a couple of the images and watch a few movie clips. Almost too simple as you would expect something extraordinary from the magazine for centuries being the cutting edge magazine within its field. The application contains very little complexity and it is fast and feels solid. You gain the same faith in the digital application as for the paper version. Why is this? I think it is because what you see is what you get. Nothing more and nothing less. In his book Designing Media Bill Moggridge explains:

“With all interaction, whatever the media that you’re interacting in, you’ve got to remove as many barriers as possible, because everyone’s got too much on. You’ve got to make it as easy and as intuitive as you can.” Try, try, and try again, until you have designed a solution that is simple and intuitive.”

Insight/gaps:
- A successful app does not have to be complex to be good. It just has to be well designed.

BBC News

A world-renowned news provider active in several media. What inspires me about their website is how they present the option of choice to view content. You can choose from browsing in News, Sport, Weather, Travel, TV or Radio. There are also some sub levels such as food, health, and music. What I find inspirational are the options: listening, reading or watching. BBC can offer these different options, as they are producers of these media. But with technology available, I believe you could design something with a similar effect.

Insight/gaps:
- We can expand the experience of news online by using human senses such as vision and hearing and combining these.
Studies on ‘values’ related to the conventional newspaper

In regards to what values the conventional newspaper has given us, individuals will get different images and thoughts depending on their backgrounds and experiences. I was interested to find out how people perceived news in these two different media: the conventional and reading news online. I hoped to find what relevant qualities I could bring from the conventional newspaper moving over to a digital format.

I sent two emails asking a group of ten individuals between the age of 30 and 70 to give me ‘words of value’ for the two different media. Below is the question in my first mail:

What two or three words ‘values’ are you thinking of when I mention the conventional newspaper?

Answers: Quality, reflection, home, time, time consuming, predictable, in-depth, local, information, static, content, habit, a lot, analytical, slow, habit, political, reflection, predictable, tradition, trust, opinion, politics, quality, news, information, stability, entertainment, pleasant, expensive, paper and regular.

Quality and opinion appeared twice in the answers.

Below are a few words that I took from the words above to do a quick experiment in relation to what these words could mean for individuals. The words I have chosen are quality, stability and trust.
Quality
Looking at the value of the word *quality* one could imagine from an individual’s point of view that most probably the individual has chosen its own source of information, thus which newspaper to read in which he or she wants to believe in to present the world’s news most accurately. For this action to happen there has to be a sense of trust involved. A relationship has been created between the reader and the newspaper. There might even be a subscription involved thus meaning that the people are willing to pay money for the service. Which makes me want to ask the question, how do you create trust and how do we keep it?

Stability
When thinking of the *value* of stability you could for example look at the pattern that you receive the newspaper in the morning always at the same time, and that you might have created a pattern to read the newspaper at the same time at the same place most days of the week. This could, for example, be at the breakfast table or in the train on your way to work. Other rituals may also include always drinking a cup of coffee while reading the newspaper, which is adding another level to the pattern (ritual) for creating a personal (pleasurable) experience. Other scenarios could be that there is a habit of discussing daily topics with your family members while reading at the breakfast table, which is adding a social level to the experience. Thus, what we can read out as more qualities from the word stability is that there can also be patterns involved in this ritual of reading the newspaper everyday.

Trust
The word trust could, for example, be that you know exactly where in the newspaper you can find the information you are looking for as it might be presented in exactly the same section on the same page everyday and has been for as long as you can remember. You feel safe that you will find the information that you are looking for. You may even have created a pattern to read the newspaper in a way that exactly fits your needs. For example, the length of your train ride to work, in which you have created a pattern that you go through certain sections that you think covers what you find relevant and gives you confidence to discuss relevant topics with your friends and colleagues.

But as you can see from just looking at these few words above describing some random values of the newspaper, we can trace that reading the newspaper is much more than just sending information from one source to another. It is about social patterns, rituals behaviours, and feelings etc that individuals have when reading the newspaper. It is about the personal relationship that is being created between the reader and the news provider.

Some of these values will naturally change when we move from reading the news from the conventional newspaper to reading the news online. You can print much longer stories than their online equivalents. People have more patience to read longer pieces in print than online (Moggridge, 2010). And by creating other experiences we change our behaviours.
Studies on ‘values’ related to reading news online

I also asked the same group of ten people to give me three words describing the value of reading news online. Three individuals out of ten directly replied back almost apologising for the fact that they did not read the news online regularly. Is there a trend that we should read news digitally? I think the recent years discussions about sustainability could have something to do with this attitude.

*Can you give me two or three ‘values’ as you think in terms of newsreading on digital platforms such as Internet, Mobile and iPhone.*

Answers: Updated, fresh, latest, accessible, hot!, guaranteed new, easy to share, spread, rapid, democratic, smooth, volatile, easily accessible, updated, independent, free, searchable, sound, in-depth, a click away, moving images, video, compact, personalized, link, fast, objective and politically biased.

Volatile, updated, ink, video and sound appeared twice in the answers.

Other comments were:

“Being able to immerse in the articles by following their links sources.”

“Just a click away, moving images/sound.”

“Pictures, higher resolution.”

Insight/gaps:

These answers where more widely spread and one of the reasons is probably that we have different experiences depending on how we read the news online. Who their news provider is and on what platform. However, there are interesting notions we can trace from these words. Many of these words express the opposite of a static experience; sound, moving images, flexible, volatile.

How information is presented

One problem when you are using some of the more popular news aggregator like www.popurls.com is that nothing jumps out of the page. There is no given hierarchy within the typography such as in the conventional newspaper when you are given visual clues of what is more important than the others. The reason is of course that data is collected from different sources but presented with no hierarchy, as there is no gatekeeper (editor) behind the information. The problem that I am speaking about is what you could say a layout problem. Which means you could have designed it differently and maybe solved the problem. But with the conventional newspaper there is a person behind the choices on how to treat the typography in the headlines to guide the reader through what is the most relevant news.
In Paper.li for example, you have the same layout as in a regular newspaper. This immediately creates a feeling that you are reading a regular newspaper. But do we want information that is computer generated deciding for you what is most relevant for you to read, looking as if a human being has chosen the information for you?
In reflection to these thoughts I would like to make a reference to the movie *2001: A Space Odyssey* by Stanley Kubrick from 1968. *2001: A Space Odyssey* is a classic story about how humans create tools that they eventually lose control of. What we humans have created, in the case of the movie, HAL the computer, thinks he knows better than its creator and in the end humankind has to destroy him.

Dave Bowman: Hello, HAL. Do you read me, HAL?

HAL: Affirmative, Dave. I read you.

Dave Bowman: Open the pod bay doors, HAL.

HAL: I’m sorry, Dave. I’m afraid I can’t do that.

Dave Bowman: What's the problem?

HAL: I think you know what the problem is just as well as I do.

Dave Bowman: What are you talking about, HAL?

HAL: This mission is too important for me to allow you to jeopardize it.

Dave Bowman: I don't know what you're talking about, HAL?

HAL: I know you and Frank were planning to disconnect me, and I'm afraid that's something I cannot allow to happen.

Dave Bowman: Where the hell'd you get that idea, HAL?

HAL: Dave, although you took thorough precautions in the pod against my hearing you, I could see your lips move.

In my research talking to people about the future of the news, people are excited about all the possibilities we have today regarding how we can read, choose, select and provide information via the Internet.
But do we want the majority of the news to be computer-generated information in the future? We could argue that humankind creates the original writing and its thoughts. But the trend goes towards the selection of data, which means the information you receive is computer generated. I think we now have to start making critical judgment if this is how we want the future to look like in regards to how news is presented.

Someone very critical to this development is Eli Pariser, author of the book *The Filter Bubble: What the Internet Is Hiding from You* and board president of MoveOn.org. He had a talk on TED Talks (a global set of conferences) in May 2011, about how companies such as Google, tailor information according to the preferences they detect in each viewer. He presented the fact that when some users searching the word ‘Egypt’ on the web, they get the latest news on the revolution, while others might only see search results for holiday vacations in Egypt. Pariser talks further about how this will have unintended dangerous consequence. He argues that this will in the end prove to be bad for us, and for democracy. “We get trapped in a ‘filter bubble’ and don’t get exposed to information that could challenge or broaden our worldview.”

(http://www.ted.com/talks/eli_pariser_beware_online_filter_bubbles.html)

And I personally believe the role of the journalist in the future has a great potential to be this critical ‘reviewer’ of fact as well as being the social media curator. To have a role that balances information about situations in the world and creates debate if necessary.

Insight/gaps:
- I think we need more than ever professional journalists who are critical reviewers of information.
4.2 Fieldwork

Situated studies of ten iPad users

I studied the behaviour of ten adults using the iPad and also took notes of their children in regards to the artefact. My first finding was that it was rather difficult to find individuals using the iPad if it was not work related. I knew from facts that it was just a small percentage of the population owning one. I was aware that not everyone would have one but in relation to how much we read about it in media I was still surprised how hard it was to find users.

I took me a week to gather a group of ten people who did not have too similar profiles. But it is clear that the group, who are using it today in the summer of 2011 in Sweden and not using it directly connected as a tool for work, are what we call early adapters to new media.

The people I studied where asked to go through the same pattern that they had had the previous day using their iPad. This was a normal weekday.

The result of the fieldwork of when we use the iPad matches the result of Read It Later statistics – which is that people use their iPad briefly in the morning to get an overview of the daily news. One user told me that they usually also had a quick look at lunch, checking for news. And only one person told me that they also used it sporadically during working hours. Two people made a joke that they usually brought the iPad with them to work but that they did not use it during working hours and that their iPad was in their bag all day.

Does this mean that the format of the iPad is not suitable for use at work, or is it that when we use the iPad it demands that we interact with the artefact and because of this have to let go of working tasks? Or is it as simple as the reading tablet has not yet have been accepted artefact in a work environment? Why is it easier to check the news on our personal computer? Is it because the browsing window and our work documents, if we work in an office, most probably is also lying on the same screen as our personal computer? Does this make us feel less guilty if we read the news next to where our actual work tasks are being placed? Is that why it is accepted to have the radio on while working, as it does not demand us to take the focus from our work? At least it is not so visible to others.

And the other result also matches the graph from ReadItLater – that the primetime is when we spend most time interacting with the iPad and reading news is in the evening and weekends. This is our leisure time when we are free from household work such as cooking, taking care of the children etc.

What is interesting to study in regards to the fact that we spend most hours using the iPad in our leisure time is in what physical positions we have when using the iPad. The way we place our body in a position is different to how we read the conventional newspaper, which could have a lot to do with the size of the iPad in contrast to the conventional
newspaper. The similarity between reading news in the conventional newspaper and how we read news on the iPad is that the way the user creates patterns for how and when they are using the artefact, even though some of them only had had it in their possession for less than two months.

Insight/gaps:
- When using the iPad you have to let go of other tasks as it demands that you interact with the artefact to have result.
- We hold a different bodily position when reading news on the iPad as opposed to reading the conventional newspaper.
- The most hours we spend using the iPad is in our leisure time.
- We create patterns of how, where and when we use the iPad.

Morning hours

The people I asked had a similar behaviour pattern in the morning. They also held similar bodily positions as you can see from the photos. They all placed themselves at the kitchen table, even the children, who may have copied their parents. The adults explained that they wanted to get information about the latest news of the world and the children informed me that they checked the news on Facebook.

Times were different for how long they spent reading news. It varied from one to twenty minutes depending on the person I asked. But no one spent more than twenty minutes in the morning using the iPad for reading news.

*The average time all the interviewees used the iPad for reading the news in the morning was 10 minutes.*

The pictures below represent a typical morning hour scan of the news presented on their iPad. The users were often very focused on what they were reading. *Note: when I interviewed Petra (on the first photo) something caught her attention on the screen as we were speaking and her focus drifted away for a minute.* There is no doubt that the images and text captures the user’s attention and that the iPad stimulates our senses.
The individuals, both adults and children, are very focused on what they are doing. The individuals are busy only with one thing, which is interacting with the artefact and reading. Sometimes there is a cup of coffee or tea by their side. The adults do not express any social patterns except when the children accompany them. Most of them had the iPad flat on the kitchen table.

Insight/gaps:

- The users are focused when interacting with the artefact.
- The interaction does not seem a social activity except for when there are children involved.
- Can we learn from the social pattern of how the adults interact with the children to emphasize a shared experience?

The use of the iPad in the evening and afternoon

In the evening the interviewees had a different behaviour. They began using their iPad after they had finished their household work. Their bodily position was often relaxed and horizontal. They were not sitting straight on a chair in the kitchen as they did in the morning. Instead, they were comfortably sitting or lying down in the sofa or in bed.

The time the interviewees spent using the iPad in the evening varied more from one another than the behaviour in the morning. One could spend hours browsing the iPad, while others would just use it for a few minutes. But in common was that they all spent more time using the iPad in the evening than they did in the morning.
In the evening they often read previously saved articles that they did not have time to read in the morning and the other main difference was that they browsed news that was more related to entertainment. They often visited Facebook and watched YouTube clips. They also read blogs, Twitter feeds and searched for food recipes.

One third of the users I asked actively updated their statuses in social media, one third where not active at all, while the rest where not active except that they sometimes would update their status on Facebook.

When I asked them which media they found most important to be updated in, the majority replied the conventional newspaper. Does this mean that what is written on paper is more reliable than digital media, or that we have a tradition to trust these sources, which we naturally follow as the truth? My conclusion is the second proposal. That we are still in a very early stage when it comes to reading news digital platforms and this will eventually change. This does not mean we will stop believing in printed media when reading news digitally is well established; as little as we stopped trusting news coming from the radio when the television arrived. But these prejudices of our history will take time to change. And humankind does not change that easily as we know!
What struck me again as reference to how adults often shared the experience with their children was that the younger children always seemed to interact with the iPad in partnership with one another. It seemed that the social need for adults was satisfied (in contrast to how the children, most having a shared experience with the artefact) because they interacted with social media. But when sharing the experience they all seemed to have more fun, even the adults.

Insight/gaps:
- Individuals enjoy reading news in their leisure time.
- The individual prefer to sit or lie in a comfortable bodily position when they use the iPad for more than twenty minutes.
- Using the iPad with others appears to be a pleasant experience.
- When adults use the artefact it is a personal experience in contrast to a social experience.
One woman I interviewed used the iPad to find new recipes. When she had found one she would also use the iPad while cooking.

Insight/gaps:
- You do not have to hold the iPad physically to have a pleasant user experience with the device.

One thing we can read out of this information is that we use the iPad differently from how we read the conventional newspaper. We do not spend thirty minutes in the morning. Instead, we scan the top news and maybe save a few articles to read later. These saved articles we bring to the tabletop in our free time.

Insight/gaps:
- We should not design a newspaper that has the same behaviour patterns as in how we read the conventional newspaper in the morning.

One of the most common remarks from the people I interviewed during these last couple of months, as I have mentioned before, is that they expressed a concern that they found it difficult to keep an overview of all the information accessible. So this means just because a world of opportunities has opened, and as statistics also show, even if we now have more information accessible we do not have enough time in the day to read everything. As one of the individual’s expressed:

“I feel stressed because I do not get all the news.”

Half of the group I interviewed told me that the iPad followed them more or less wherever they moved around in their house in the evening. In other words: the iPad had become like a watch – not checking what time it is but what news there is. Below are some other comments from the individuals I studied using their iPad:

“I’d rather watch my iPad than my laptop. iPad is more pleasant to use. I think it is much better than the newspaper.”
“You can get great tips and be reminded of important things to learn through social media. Then go to the source!”

And a more critical comment:

“I read more but less of each subject. I have no depth. Difficult to change this behaviour now.”

One of the challenges in this design project is to decide if there is a need, and how to combine two worlds of social media and journalism into one platform to provide overview and accessibility. We are living in a society that is overloaded with information.
4.3 Sketching

Exploring the design by sketching

I like to draw at the same time as I think of a design solution. You could easily sketch directly on the computer. But I agree with what Paul Saffo said in the book Designing Media by Bill Moggridge, that I find it both faster and easier to go back to earlier sketches, which can inspire me for further development rather than going back to old documents on the computer. This iterative process of drawing I find very valuable when I start with a new design project. This process of working is described in the book Educating the Reflective Practitioner by Donald A. Schön. For example, a designer uses tools such as a pen and paper to start sketching on a given problem (design challenge) usually after he has done some research on the subject. In the process of sketching he reflects on his drawing and reframes the problem as he continues to do another drawing based on his reflection. The act of reflecting-in-action enables the process of creating new ideas in a repeated loop. By framing and reframing the designer transforms his idea until he reaches the desired design solution.

Defining the target group

My design will focus on the users who have been surrounded by the conventional newspaper in their daily lives and who are interested in following the news – those who read the morning paper for about half an hour a day and who will eventually move over, or have already started reading news on digital platforms. A well-educated audience (Sternvik, 2009) that might also be expected to be updated in these media.

![Sketch of users]

How would we want to interact with an electronic device that is mobile and that you have with you all the time? I needed to visualise for myself who these individuals might be. I imagined the people in my close environment, friends to my family, people I saw on the street and
my 95 year old grandfather. My grandfather, I think, would appreciate a well-designed news aggregator more than anyone I know. He is an eager reader of news and has a great interest in everything that happens in the world. In fact, when I think of him, I understand that the challenge does not necessarily have to be in age differences between the users. The big challenge is to create an application for people with varied timetables and interest.

But what mental model would a person have who only had read real physical newspapers their whole life, like my grandfather? How would he know how to begin using an aggregator that provides articles as in the conventional newspaper as well as a social layer? How easy would it be for him to figure out the language of interaction when he never had an encounter with an iPad before? How could I match his mental model with the conceptual model? Did I need some kind of film showing how to use the application? Many of the apps I have seen have some sort of instruction when you enter the front page.

I also read a funny but interesting article in the New York Times. Tips on how older adults could keep up with technology. They made suggestions such as how, if they wanted to be more active, they could buy a video game console, to keep in touch buy a webcam, if you wished to be updated and informed about what is happening in the world pick up a reading tablet, if you wanted to be productive download some apps, and stream movies right to the TV if you want to be entertained. In the end of the article they said:

“These products and services are not radical departures from everyday life, but they can make measurable improvements, allowing people to be more connected, efficient and informed. And since those goals are not age-restricted, neither should the products that help attain them.”
(http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/03/business/retirementspecial/03Tech.html?_r=3&scp=1&sq=How%20older%20adults%20can%20keep%20up%20with%20technology&st=cse)

This reminds me, as does my grandfather, that the medium is not actually age restricted. But just because most new technologies are designed to people under the age of fifty does not mean the medium has any restriction. The advertising just tricks you to think so. But I also reminded myself to keep in mind not to design an interface that was too simple and unnaturally educational for the twenty-year-old-something user.

I went back to my studies looking at news providers already being designed for the iPad. Again the Wired magazine came to my mind – the fluent, interactive language and the lack of complexity. I would keep this interaction design in mind for my future work.
Viewpoint A: I get the picture

In my situated studies I watched the users sitting at the kitchen table in the morning, getting deeply involved in what they were reading and experiencing. This action and their behaviour reminded me of the ritual of reading the conventional newspaper in the morning. How they had placed themselves in the kitchen. How they where sitting upright in chair and how they held the device. And of course that they were busy reading the latest news.

I thought about designing an interface with similar and recognizable layout and typography as in the conventional newspaper. The individuals I had in mind were not necessarily too familiar with using the digital platforms to read news, not at present time at least, but who most probably will be in the future. I was thinking this could be a way to guide them into the new platform, creating something they could relate to. Then the gap would not be too big and it would create a sense of familiarity. Similar to the website of the New York Times, but different, in contrast to making the newspaper look more like a glossy magazine such as in DN+ or the Daily.
From my experience various designs arouse different feelings. A word written in a specific typeface will tell a different story than if it is written in a different one, as the illustration below describes. (http://www.fastcodesign.com/1664719/infographic-of-the-day-why-should-you-care-about-typography)

Donald A. Norman talks in his book titled Emotional Design that the design has to be in harmony with its environment. He speaks about his teapots. How he hardly uses them except for when he has guests and how he carefully selects a most fitting one for the moment, but that he also values them as aesthetic objects, because they are part of creating the feeling of the moment. As in how you can love a magazine not only for its content of articles and photography, but for the size, the quality of the paper or the sound it makes when turning the page – the user experience of the artefact itself.
“Good design means that beauty and usability are in balance. An object that is beautiful to the core is no better than one that is only pretty if they both lack usability.” Donald Norman

I continued making some more drawings and tried different layouts. I knew, as a result of my situated studies, that people where prepared to spend an average of ten minutes to read the news in the morning. But my concern was also that some were only prepared to spend one minute while others could use the iPad for twenty minutes. You can get an overview of the headlines in the conventional newspaper in one minute as well as reading deeper in articles and read for twenty minutes. But I was questioning what kind of information would the user want to intuitively get from the whole picture, and not be concerned about what they might be missing from social media. I had heard several individuals expressing their frustration about not being able to get the whole picture. I knew as a fact that people read more fragmented news. But was there not a way to make the interface so clear that you could directly scan the top news as in the conventional newspaper’s front page.

“I read more but less of each subject. I have no depth. Difficult to change this behaviour now.” comment from the interviewee.
The situation was that I had somewhere between one and twenty minutes to present news to the user. I made drawings of how the headlines and articles would look in the conventional – bigger headlines for the biggest news and using typography to create a sense of overview. I added on the front page a social media section reflecting the articles. I also added a realtime movie from the latest news to highlight topicality. A visual element that most news providers online use today and which I find a very effective way to create a sense of reality and immediacy – this happens now.

I was inspired by the conventional newspapers front page and the social media portals and other news aggregators already being available online. I also added an information visualisation map of where in the world things where happening to create a feeling of overview. By using automated technology, I knew that the page would automatically be different – different hours of the day. Could this solve some of the problems of the medium being available twenty-four seven? I knew this was something some of the conventional newspapers where struggling with. You regularly witness online news providers writing comments such as this site gets updated every six hours. In a way this is an open and transparent way of informing about actuality, but I do not find it attractive. I immediately feel I should go somewhere else to get the latest news.

But I was puzzled as to why users seemed to have less time reading news on the iPad compared to reading the conventional newspaper, which was read in average thirty minutes in the morning. While I was doing some mock-up drawings of front pages and sub levels and testing my behaviour while interacting with the interface, I realized when interacting with the information on my prototype, I was much more actively engaged than when I was reading the conventional newspaper. I had to use my arm and move my hand and fingers over the screen. My actions demanded a lot of my attention.

This is so obvious and I also had access to the information earlier, but at this time when I was designing the interface and not user testing it,
it had not appeared as a problem. Besides the fact that people are busy, especially parents, many of those I interviewed were parents. Reading the news in the morning demanded more attention than reading the conventional newspaper. Was this why no one had mentioned eating while checking the news on the iPad in the morning? But still, maybe not the most pleasant experience to interact with – something that most likely will get dirty while using it. The screen is made of glass and bound to be greasy. So eating while browsing is not the best combination. I was again convinced that when design the newspaper for digital mobile platforms there was a need for a completely different design.

I continued to explore further in my sketching as to how I could combine editorial content with a social layer of information. I had seen many great examples from already existing online news providers. But when making mock-ups I found the screen limiting and I found the interface becoming overcrowded with all the information I wanted to fit in. I came to the conclusion that I had to divide information and make simple transitions between the different information areas so that you could flip easily back and forward between the screens but only see a specific area of information at a time, as in the sketch below. You see the headline of the article. You flip over to read related social media in relation to that article. What is left from the article to see is just the headline reminding you of the topic.

Of course I could have done what most other news aggregators do, filling the screen and allowing for scrolling. But this did not make sense to me to copy such user behaviour. My conclusion was, as I mentioned earlier, I had realized that interacting with the iPad demanded more attention than reading the conventional newspaper. A user behaviour that I found restricting to where the experience would take place.
With the conclusion of creating simple transitions between the different areas of information I explored how to create a value of trust by seeing the journalist behind the article. To create a transparency over his network and sources. In the book Designing Media the founder of Wikipedia speaks about simple design rules to create communities:

1. Leave the software as open as possible to let users do things their own way.
2. Keep all versions of an entry remembered and accessible to ease policing.
3. Make changes easy to see by color-coded version tracking.
4. Keep comments and discussions within the Wiki pages for visibility.
5. Don’t attack people personally; discuss but don’t accuse.

How would the comment feature work? How much would I allow the user to be able to directly interact with the journalists network? I knew from my studies that there had to be the possibility on commenting on articles and newsfeed. There also had to be an option of commenting on comments. For the moment, I did not want to make strict user restrictions. I felt I had not yet reached a good concept of how to develop the design. I wanted to keep an open mind.

**Viewpoint B: I personalize my setting**

I started to make another set of drawings. I found my earlier ideas valuable but with restriction and limitations – the restrictions of the user behaviour in combination with the limitation of the size of the screen of the device in relation to which content to fit. I really wanted to create a sense of overview and accessibility. It was so clear from the interviews that people were frustrated by the abundance of information. Occupying my mind at the time was how to design an interface where you in one minute could get an overview of the latest news as you
would by reading the front page of the conventional newspaper. I questioned why anyone would make the effort of opening the iPad for just one minute’s reading. It demands actions to get to the first page in any application on the iPad.

I began with a new starting point. I began explore how to design an aggregator for news to be used in the leisure time. In my situated studies I had seen two major patterns when using the iPad – in the morning and in the evening when all the domestic work had been done or in the Sunday afternoon. This was a completely different scenario. The user had more time to spend. I realized I now did not have to fill the interface with an overload of information that I felt as a restriction in my earlier sketches when designing for using the iPad for news in the morning.

I began my work based on that the users at this time of the day had more time to spend and read more in-depth news and related to their personal interest such as sport or local news, rather than general news. I also included the fact that this was the time of the day you spent reading your saved articles. I knew from my studies that the overall feeling among the user was far more relaxed than in the morning. The users’ positions, as we can see from the photos, were more laid-back and comfortably positioned than in the morning hours.

How could I make a design that could work for everyone but still satisfy to meet the need of each individual? How did an interface look like where you read about your special interests like opening the sports section in the conventional newspaper? On many news sites online you can easily swap over for the latest news in the top menu. The same feature goes for almost every news application. But I questioned if that really created a sense of having personalised news adjusted to the individual. The reason I felt I had to create a personalised news experience was that I was convinced that the conventional newspaper, moving their content straight over to digital platforms, would have very little chance to compete with the already existing news providers online and the news aggregators such as Flipboard, Zite, popurls.com to just name a few. From my previous research, I was convinced that content is king as the New York Times publisher and chairman Arthur Sulzberger so strongly stated. And this was one tool the conventional newspapers could compete with.
There are huge challenges ahead for the conventional newspaper to be able to compete with the existing news aggregators already taking market share. As I mentioned earlier in this paper, the newspapers are competing with producers who are specialist in creating user experiences and who have been exploring this area for probably more than a decade. Applications with great user experiences invites for subscribers. The news publishing producers of the conventional newspaper are freshmen in this area. If they have any chance of surviving this line of business they have to be prepared to create applications which provides editorial credibility in combination with a great user experience.

Back on my drawing board I wondered what gave me such pleasure and sense of freedom when I browsed the New York Times Chrome. I realized it was how I could make the choice myself, how I wished to experience the news. If I had little time I could choose the setting of just looking at headlines. If I was bored I could change the settings to look at images, which reminded me of how I enjoyed the experience of the Guardian Eyewitness application, where you can view photos related to news. I realized that the feeling of freedom was given to me as I had the choice to change the setting myself. This flexibility inspired me. The content was the same. The only thing that changed was in what way I wished to experience the news. I found a thread to an idea that made me feel inspired to continue developing my design. A design with various settings that could be adjusted according to which situation the person was in.

I developed my thought of how this could work. A design where you can tune in different settings depending on which mood you would like to experience the news. For example:

- I would like to read the headlines
- I want to watch the news
- I would like to view twitter feeds related to the news
- I would like to read what my friends are viewing
- I want to listen to the news
- I would like to watch moving image
Exploring different navigation options. Defining what content of choice the news aggregator should provide to create a sense of overview as accessibility. Customization features – deciding what was most important in regards to creating a personalised experience.
How do you read texts and how do you view images on the pad. Analysing the way to scroll the page and how to navigate. Exploring how to create the best user experience for the different settings.

I began to explore if I could add a social layer to the experience as in how I had seen the kids in my field studies enjoying the company of each other while playing with the iPad? To create a social platform. Like when the family used to gather together in front of the fireplace, then radio and later the television. I was playing with the idea of syncing the iPad with the television and using the artefact as storage for the “saved” news, as well as functioning as the remote. In this way, the family gathered on the couch watching TV with their different selection of stored material and shared their interests.
As my design began to frame the situation I felt confident to challenge my solution by exploring options for sharing content with other devices.

I continued to make drawings of how the iPad was used in different situations, trying to find the answers of what the content of information was in the different times of the day and bodily positions. It became obvious for me that this was not a design project that was easily solved by one solution.

I went through my sketches and made some adjustments. I realized that the design I had done above where adjustable to the use in morning hours. When people had a need to get news that was comprehensive and simple to use while having breakfast. There was to little time in the people’s lives to read in-depth articles in the morning.
What if I moved the iPad completely from being an artefact that you physically interact with and placed it somewhere else in the periphery.

By placing the artefact in the periphery, and putting it in a play mode, it was still present and providing me with top news but not in the way for breakfast or other chores. In this way I could combine:

Viewpoint A: I get the picture
Viewpoint B: I personalize my setting

By the above solution I had managed to find a design solution where you can scan news in one minute or twenty minutes. The peripheral mode that was designed to be used in the morning, where individuals could scan the news without physically having to interact with the device. By this design the conventional newspaper moving into digital platforms could now compete with the existing news providers online, because of the personalisation of being able to tune into different settings. They had the option to interact with the application without using their hands but instead voice commands.
The other need was to immerse in articles and various topics. This was something users wanted to do in their leisure time. If I could combine the in-depth reading with the solution above, I could provide a tool for competing with news providers with more computer generated content and who could not compete with what the conventional newspapers had – editorial credibility.

I was happy with my idea, but I still had some challenges – how to be able to switch between the two different modes? I also knew I now had to decide which content to have for the application. I knew from previous design work that this would cause complications if I did not make these choices now.

I also needed to go deeper in to how to design the interface and the interactions for both modes. ‘I get the picture’ and ‘I personalize my setting’ and their variety of settings.

By creating a choice of when and how the individual would like to experience news so opened it to a new solution.
How articles could be saved and how I could create a library of saved articles that could easily be scanned and viewed.

The concept of my design was finished. I was clear about creating one application that was divided into two. You could describe the solution as being a frontside and a backside providing the same information but in two different modes. In this way the user could choose how they wanted to receive news in relation to when, where and how they were. The design concept was ready and I could begin to make wireframes.
5. The design proposal

This news application is designed as a proposal for how the conventional newspapers could be developed for the future. I have made a design for those who are interested in following the news. The focus in my design has been to create a news application that has combined editorial credibility, social layer and a fluent interaction experience.

The are two key functions that have been added to adjust to the conventional newspaper to fit as an aggregator providing news online:
- Editorial responsibility for social media content.
- Designed to be used 24 hours a day.

I have made a design available in two different modes that I call:
- In the periphery.
- In-depth reading.

Mode A: Design In the periphery

The design being an aggregator providing news to create overview and accessibility where the electronic device, the iPad, being placed in the periphery. There is a choice of either much or little interactivity.

Depending on which setting you have chosen or by just using default, a slide show with news is being played on the screen. Imagine a similar experience to listening to the radio in the background. You listen without much effort but when you notice something interesting, you either higher the volume or pause a moment to listen to what they say. In my design solution you have more options than just listening to the news. You can view headlines, moving images, social media feeds and more. Prime time for interacting with the application is in the morning hours.

You do not physically have to interact with the application except when you start. It will run by itself. However, you have the choice to physically interact and browse the news both in-depth as well as laid back. But the solution in this mode is mainly designed for in the periphery.
By pressing “save” or using voice command the selected news are being saved in the cloud, for later reading or viewing.

As an alternative you can choose to deepen your reading of a saved article and change mode into “read”. You always have a choice to flip back and forward between “view” and “read”.

When tapping twice on the screen a top and bottom navigation will appear, presenting different options such as choice of setting or area of interest. This is also where you can switch over to in-depth “read”, which I will describe in further detail later. The blue sections describe your options and where you are. You can choose either viewing News (general), Sports, Business, Art Culture, Entertainment or Local News. You can also decide how you would like to experience the news by listening, viewing or reading the news.
You can save articles for later reading, which is then stored in your personal library and you can easily find back to your saved articles. You can choose to explore the articles more in depth by switching the mode to “read” or share link to social media or email to a friend.
Saving news for later has also another main purpose – it can be synced with the television by screen mirroring. The application opens up to be a social platform as in how we in the old days used to gather around the fire, later the radio, then television – the family gathering on the sofa sharing their interests using the iPad as remote.
Mode B: In-depth reading

This is the more in-depth option of the application where you browse through articles or read ‘saved’ articles that you have selected in the peripheral mode.

You have the option to read in-depth articles, reflect and comment. You have a social filter reflecting and collaborating with the articles to create momentum, which you also can reflect and comment on. This social filter has been selected by the editors and staff so that you as the reader can follow experts debating on an issue. As in the conventional news magazine, there a filter has been added so that not only the journalist’s writing is the fundamental source but also the journalist’s own network provides in-depth lesson. For example, liberal journalist A writes about the elections in Finland. She has in her network journalist colleague B, who is a conservative. When journalist A presents her article in The Newspaper you as reader can also read journalist B’s opinion about the elections in Finland.

The transparency of information will present a wider perspective of a news topic and thus create a sense of trustworthiness and authenticity. The journalist is still active but is now also acting as curator of social media feeds, which provides the user with a broad picture of a specific news topic or debate.
**THE NEWSPAPER**

**Wednesday 20 April 2011**

**Top News**

**Hundratusental på gatorna i Jemen**

Talibanregimen och kontraer har per sig sig på gatorna i Jemen i dag för att visa provokativa utslag.

By Anna Andersson och Lars Larsson 19 kmöden 19.00

**Sports**

**Rovegas Strike on Late Error**

Televisio 19.35 i vecka har tagit grip på en av de mest avgörande matcherna i sitt snitt med tre av dubbeltrion. Efter att ha tagit ledningen 1-0 i minuter 1-0 genom en mål av målvakt 1-0 och av de mest avgörande i sidolottet delar de resterande minuter omkring och spelar på biljournalistens värj. 19.35

By Anna Andersson och Lars Larsson 19 kmöden 19.00

**Business**

**Stor valframgång för Finländarna**

När 86 procent av rösterna har räknats i Finland har Samlingspartiet 20,1 procent av röstarna. Samhällskristna har 19,2 och Socialdemokraterna är nästan uppe i samma nivå med 19,1 procent.


För fem av sexen var valframgång 67,8 procent, vilket var den högsta unifoma sexen längre.

Det heliga dagshandboken utgiven i tidningens våren 1943, då 81 procent av de medborgare som går till berättar.

Opponseringsstartet kan ha tryckt på att samhalls- 

Finland leges att bestämma i kaféerna på Centralen, 

Samlingspartiet och Socialdemokraterna som alla var nöja med i den väsentliga som de ska avslutas.

Sedan Pans Lippor trots som Socialdemokraterna belöna på 1990-talet har gjort att alla kan morena mot alla. Ingen protest, inte en 

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**Comment**

**Local News**

By Anna Andersson och Lars Larsson 19 kmöden 19.00

**Sports**

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Stor valframgång för Sannfinländarna

Nir 86 procent av rösterna har räknats i Finland har Samlingspartiet 20,1 procent av rösterna. Sannfinländarna har 19,2 och Socialdemokraterna är nästan uppe i samma nivå med 19,1 procent.
6. Graphic User Interface
JWT Telegraph
Total fee for Oxlade-Chamberlain - who is at Arsenal's training HQ today - is 12m. Big price for a player with only Lge 1 experience

bbcsport_david
Arsenal plan to announce Oxlade-Chamberlain signing on official website in next couple of hours. All done and dusted
afc #sainsfc
7. Recommendations and conclusions

For the future to explore

When I began doing research for this paper I had very little thought about the usage of the iPad as artefact. I saw it as an already well developed media. My original thoughts were about purely designing an aggregator for online news that combines editorial sources with social media in order to provide overview and accessibility. I was focused on how to move the content from the conventional newspaper over to the iPad, as the use of mobile Internet is growing as we speak.

In this thesis I am proposing that the iPad might be used also in a social context as well as being a personal computer. And maybe also a device more frequently used in the periphery as in my design proposal. Today, we are mainly having experiences while physically interacting with the artefact itself, the iPad, holding the device in our hands. With my design solution, using the artefact in the periphery, the user experience is happening in the open space. It would be interesting to explore further how we can develop these user experiences. It would also be interesting to explore which related artefacts we could develop as a result of such development.

These thoughts about the iPad not only being and a personal computer became apparent when I was watching people using the artefact. When I studied how and where and why they were using it.

One other highly relevant topic that I believe is important to continue finding tools for is how can we develop systems where journalists use social media as a tool for their work. Find solutions where journalists can present the voice of the people without having to loose their credibility as journalist. How to innovate the role of the journalist before it is too late and we have lost too much knowledge of the value of editorial credibility as weapon for democracy.

I also believe it is important to explore further how we can create fruitful revenue models for the conventional newspapers as they move over to a digital format. Without finding a way to charge for content and being able to pay journalists for their work, the occupation of journalism has little hope for a prosperous future.
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9. Appendix

Questions asked while studying the ten individuals using the iPad.

What age are you?
-20
20-29
30-39
40-49
50-

What gender are you?
Male
Female

Which social media are you using?
Twitter
Blogs
YouTube
Flickr
Other

What social media do you update?
Twitter
Blogs
YouTube
Flickr
Other

How important is it for you to keep you updated what happens in the following media? 1: not important, 2: little important, 3: very important.
Newspaper (paper) + which
Digital newspaper + what
The foreign press
Up
Twitter
Blogs
YouTube
Flicker

Do you think social media is important for reporting news today?

Which social media channel do you consider as most important regarding news?
Twitter
Blogs
YouTube
Flicker
Other

Do you trust your sources?

Do you feel that you have an eye and overview on the news?