

WHAT WILL JOURNALISM LOOK LIKE?

14 SCENARIOS

# News flash from the future!

We asked the top media minds at global design and innovation firm **IDEO** (designer of the Apple mouse, consultant to Fortune 500 companies) to imagine: How will we get our news after the traditional model falls apart? Here's their answer.

**THE ONCE PROFITABLE NEWS INDUSTRY IS TEETERING ON THE BRINK.** The recession has battered advertising. Dailies are folding. Printing the *New York Times* for a year costs twice as much as sending every subscriber a free Kindle. *The Daily Show* is a more trusted source than network news. And consumers have been marginalized in media dialogue about how to save journalism.

Yet how we define and experience news can—and should—change for the better, if we ground ourselves in what people really need and want.

The next four pages showcase two environments that put the future of news in the context of our daily lives. In these scenarios, we see that information has become even more personalized and hyperlocal—and, paradoxically, more communal, participatory, and global. Journalism is more like having a conversation. People speak with unique voices, take ownership of content, and establish credibility, which in turn enables strong communities in which news can thrive. Anything that's notable to a person in a particular moment and place becomes newsworthy.

This future journalism is less beholden to current models of production, distribution, and advertising support—but nimble brands still find ways to thrive. Formerly obscure companies, like Google, Facebook, YouTube, and Wikipedia—now household names—are joined by other powerful companies in a network of touchpoints that lets us find the information we want as soon as we want it. News is supported by a web of contributions from consumers, for-profits, nonprofits, distribution partners, and other entities. Rather than eschewing risk and possible failure, brands (at least the ones that endure) shift from a top-down model of centralized distribution to become incubators for journalistic experiments. **TURN THE PAGE ➡**

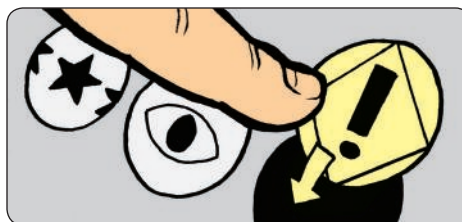
ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM MANNING FOR IDEO | PHOTOGRAPHS BY NICOLAS ZURCHER WITH IDEO



## Everything is illuminated

Peer into the future and imagine the landscape of information that could be available to you.

When connected to high-speed, wireless Internet, two people looking at the same street could access completely different information. One might call up postings for nearby school events, while the other might opt to see news about a campaign to fix local sidewalks following the last earthquake. Users could add to this cloud of news right from where they stood, or from anywhere else with network coverage. This customized mix of news feeds could include the local, international, social, personal—or just plain weird.



**Feed your mind:** This highly contextual network can provide real-time information from countless feeds and filters. A far cry from today's mobile RSS feeds, the network lets you blog live, trace a history, find a clue, follow a trail, or even uncover a mystery.

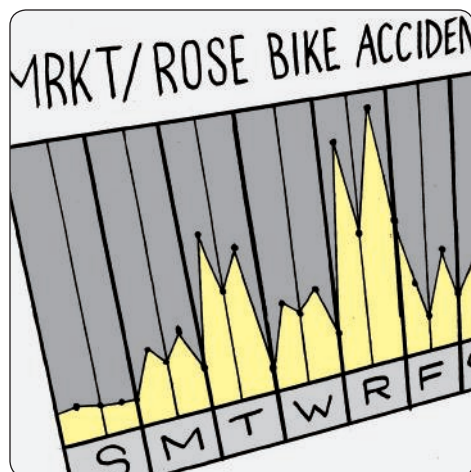


**Screen capture:** Your video-enabled mobile device will become an enhanced lens on the world, thanks to a combination of high bandwidth, location-specific information, tremendous processing power, and ultrasmart image processing.

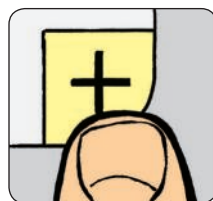


**What's old is new:** Depending on your interests, you'll be able to browse through various histories of wherever you find yourself. How did this street look on VJ Day? When was the last time Radiohead played down the road?





**Crystal-ball culture:** Predictive analysis follows us everywhere, and it's created by more than the major data crunchers (Google, Microsoft, and government agencies). Every time you trash a restaurant or alert the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition about an accident, you contribute to the collective foresight: *That restaurant probably won't be very good. You really shouldn't be near this intersection on Thursday nights under a sliver moon.*



**Make your mark:** All this information didn't come from just anywhere—it came from each of us, as well as from other trusted news and information sources. We can rate it, rant about it, forward it to friends and colleagues, add to it, and even edit it on the spot.



**Embellishment welcome:** News is often generated when a curious onlooker digs deeper into a story that's been overlooked or discarded. This great find might start with a seemingly trivial observation ("Hey, was that hot-dog graffiti here yesterday?").





## Future newsroom

Tomorrow's newsroom resembles today's café—but look closer.

From your perch, you see that the woman near the door is commenting on a story that a blogger just posted. Market St. Beat, as the blogger's handle reads, is one of the most popular and trusted journalists in the city—but she's never set foot in a traditional newsroom.

Those touchpad tables are filled with local information: You can scroll through upcoming events (from concerts to job fairs) and get a customized printout of the ones that catch your eye. An older patron still likes to read the paper, but it's not really paper. And he's not just reading—he's watching and commenting, making the world a smaller and more personal place.

Almost everyone is making some kind of contribution that has a local (and possibly global) impact. The café itself is a source of news, personalized for its customers.



### Participation pays:

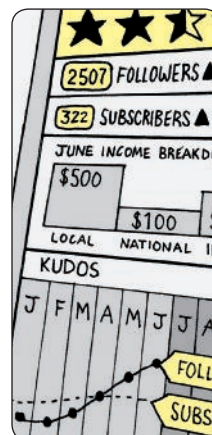
Several regulars earn points and credibility by reading, writing, rating, and ranting about the news (and they, in turn, are rated by other café patrons). This process makes the café a trusted new filter with its own unique local voice. Points can get you a free cup of joe, a dose of notoriety, even the attention of professional news networks.



**Everyone's part of the story:** Within moments of being posted, this neojournalist's story receives immediate feedback from her readers, her trusted network of reviewers and fact-checkers, and her sources.



**The signal behind the noise:** By analyzing the frequency and content of online conversations, advanced social network analysis tools will help give newshounds access to unlikely networks of experts on the most obscure subjects in the strangest of places.



### Burn your press card:

Like any San Francisco Giant, all reporters will have immediate, real-time statistical analysis of their performance. Just as sports stats have undergone a revolution that increased their relevance, so will our ability to judge the quality of our journalists. Good luck, Glenn Beck.





**Sharing is caring:** Interactive touchscreens are built into everyday work surfaces, allowing people to share news and information as easily as passing notes across a table.



**Hitching a ride:** Good ol' cork bulletin boards are supplemented by electronic means of displaying community activity and interests. What's happening in this café? What's the latest from our sister café in Bangalore? Anyone looking for a lift to Portland?



**Print isn't dead:** Local newspapers and magazines with passionate audiences will thrive, and each reader's experience will be enhanced by easily customizable newspapers-on-demand.



**Paper goes plastic:** The speed at which we create, react to, and act on news is fundamentally changing our relationship to information and how we put it in context. Revolutionary interfaces will engage us in constant dialogue with our surroundings and our favorite news sources, from Wolf Blitzer to an uncle in Shanghai.