

'Do people in TV have egos? Of course they do'

Nick Robinson on his Presidential grilling, p2

15.12.06



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Kelvin's regional nightmares

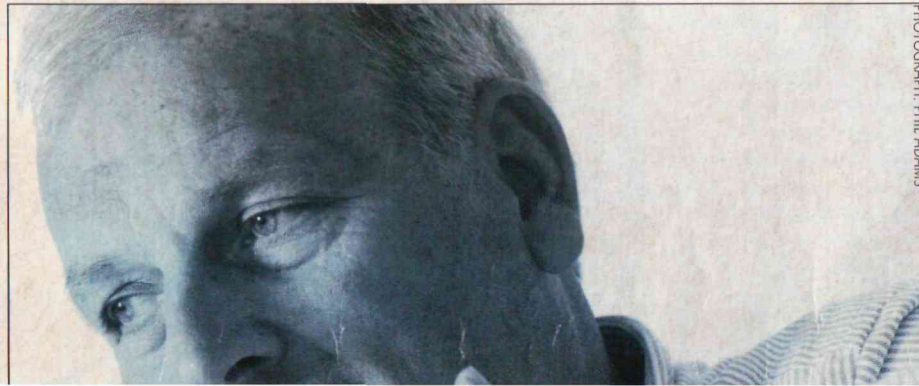
Reality TV show bid to set former Sun editor on regional press

BROADCASTING EXCLUSIVE

By Zoe Smith

The UK's largest commercial television production company is developing a series that could see legendary Fleet Street editor Kelvin MacKenzie become the journalistic equivalent of TV chef Gordon Ramsay.

The programme, currently in development at Granada TV, proposes to follow the former *Sun* editor's attempts to revive the circulation of a flagging regional newspaper. The company is in the process of finding a publisher willing to let MacKenzie do to a



PHOTOGRAPH: PHIL ADAMS

INSIDE

Make it your New Year's resolution to win one of these...

The British Press Awards take place in March 2007, so you need to act sharpish if you want to be in the running. Check out this year's categories, fill out an entry form and whizz it to us in the post. Then start working on your acceptance speech. **Centre section**

The **British**
press
awards

Where next?

Hubs, pods, vods and blogs were the buzzwords in 2006, but what effect will this year's developments in journalism have on the year to come? Press Gazette asks seven experts in various fields what key developments from 2006 will affect journalists next year

NEW MEDIA, ROBERT ANDREWS

It's all about the UGC

2006 may be remembered for several reasons. It saw Saddam Hussein convicted for war crimes, it was the Chinese year of the dog and it was a year which saw former England captain David Beckham relent to the reality of a lacklustre performance.

But this year's calling card in media circles must be the wholesale transferral of audiences and advertising from traditional to online media. Now, like Beckham, the news business has realised it must pass on the armband in order to stay afloat.

Web developments which created waves this year had one thing in common — they were each motivated by a socialist zeal to let users share.

The news agenda at Digg and Newsvine is decided by readers with votes. YouTube rocketed from nowhere to 65,000 uploads a day and a two-thirds share of the UK market. "Look at my Flickr" became an acceptable thing to say in a British pub.

"Web 2.0" is what Silicon Valley called it. "User-generated content!" cried editors. None of these start-ups started up in 2006, but it was their popularisation, fuelled by this year's wave of cheap broadband offers, that made news media sit up and take note.

Trinity Mirror, ITV, GCap and the New York Times Company all posted poor financial results as their advertising base and key youth demographic began to evaporate and re-emerge on web pages with social networking features.

Those pages are not necessarily news sites, but news publishers will have noted such an approach may be an answer to their woes and a fightback has begun. Borrowing such features, Telegraph.co.uk's recently launched Bay13 cricket site displays readers' posts and photos besides staffers' articles. The Sun's new MySun effort asks readers to provide story tips.

But Murdoch has barely begun to integrate MySpace with his news properties, and user-generated content could play an important part in re-establishing ITV's closeness to its viewers next year.

In 2007, the smarter proprietors will embrace the trend, not just because they want to use the tools to their journalism, but because balance sheets dictate they must if they are to retain their audience in the digital age.

Robert Andrews writes on technology and media

MAGAZINES, COLIN CRUMMY

What's in a name?

At a BBC Magazines in-house conference in the summer, the idea of a name change was floated, since in a new media age, "magazine" doesn't quite seem adequate. The same conference heard that South Korea, in the top three of all Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries for broadband penetration, had seen magazine sales slump to the point where their titles look like bagged-up lucky dips with a magazine slung in as an afterthought.

Despite the inevitability of UK-wide broadband penetration, the magazine stand in WH Smith is not about to be dismantled. Magazines continue to be a hugely successful branch of publishing. What we do know is that from the amount of cash spent this year on digital offshoots, publishers have committed themselves, once again, to new media and it is this

development that will define the future of magazine publishing.

Digital divisions sprung up in a number of the major groups — from entire new propositions at Natmags, which nabbed Handbag.com for a reported £22m, and new digital director roles at Emap, IPC and Hachette.

Promotions, appointments and launches happened everywhere, from BBC's bbcgoodfood.com to, on a B2B tip, VNU's broadcasting suite, while companies such as Dennis and Future confined their big launches to online only.

Of immediate interest are the online versions of already successful magazines such as *Heat*, due next year and new paid-for content currently undergoing trials at Emap's Active portfolio. Will the two spring print launches in women's weeklies from IPC and News Magazines have woven digital offshoots into the design?

There are big questions to be asked about the purpose of magazines: where reader interaction begins and ends, and where exactly the money's going to come from for all these fancy party tricks.

It will take more than a name change to conquer this brave new world, but the suggestion, like practically everything else that happened in magazines, felt like a fresh start.

Colin Crummy is Press Gazette's magazines reporter

NEWSPAPER ETHICS, TONY HARCUP

When galley slaves speak out

The most significant event of the journalism year took place on the night of 17 October, when a bunch of hacks raised their voices for ethical journalism — at the *Daily Star*, of all places.

The following day's edition was about to go to bed featuring a full-page *Daily Fatwa*, purportedly showing "how Britain's fave newspaper would look under Muslim rule". It promised a "page-three burkha babes picture special" and offered a "free beard for every bomber".

I have no problem with religion being ridiculed, but this spoof was not part of an enlightenment project. It was produced within the context of the anti-Muslim hysteria that has become part of our national discourse.

Not everyone in the newsroom that evening thought it big or clever, and concerned journalists gathered at an emergency meeting of their NUJ chapel. They voted to ask management to think again about running the "deliberately offensive" copy. This opportunity for second thoughts was taken and the page was pulled at the last minute.

Why was it so significant? Because it showed that even galley slaves could put their heads above the parapet and question the editorial judgement of their masters.

Sure, they were worried about the risk of a violent backlash as well as the ethics of the situation. Sure, not everyone shared their qualms. But, whatever we think of their specific objections, the fact is that instead of absolving themselves of ethical responsibility for their newspaper's behaviour, *Star* journalists said: "Hang on a minute, is this right?"

And they did something very unusual: they got together independently of the editorial hierarchy, discussed an ethical issue, and passed on their collective views. A willingness to do this is likely to become even more important in the future, as job

"Ethical journalism requires open discussion as well as self-reflection and just occasionally requires journalists to do what those hacks at the *Daily Star* did — stand up and be counted"

Tony H

insecurity militates against individuals sticking their necks out.

Ethical journalism requires open discussion as self-reflection, and just occasionally it requires journalists to do what those hacks at the *Daily Star* did — stand up and be counted.

Tony Harcup is a senior lecturer in the University of Sheffield's journalism studies course

REGIONALS, PAUL HORROCKS

Journos need technical skills

Over the next year, open minds will be needed to create a level playing field between platforms, particularly print and online. New recruits will increasingly be joining newsrooms where the video camera skills and certainly be able to use a mobile phone with picture and video capabilities, maybe editing packages and putting sound on a video package. In the future this will be a given as much as shorthand and local government. Print skills are the bedrock, but on top, journalists will need technical skills.

We all know that newspaper companies are under pressure in terms of commercial revenues. It is folly to suggest suddenly that people who are going to be paid an average of £10,000 a year more. It's a practical reality that media businesses need people equipped with the tools to do the job.

We have just started live Channel M news from our newsroom. Our central news team has evening and weekly newspaper staff, Cheshire and online staff all within easy reach of each other. We have a conversation about how best to deliver information to Greater Manchester. It makes even sense when you have people working closely together.

More media companies will have to regard their website and the newspaper as the same, as well as finding ways of monetising video, audio and other content with the commercial strategies to go with it. That's a given.

Another key development that will have an impact on the coming year is the launch of new newspapers — in London and the regions.

Last week, the *Standard* posted a 21.37 per cent drop in its paid-for sale. If that's the effect the new free newspapers are having in London, other cities are bound to follow suit.

Such is the pressure on other regional centres — we know they are looking at our experience and wouldn't be surprised if there was an announcement of more lites or more part-paid, paid for certain parts of the country. You can see centres as Liverpool, Newcastle, Birmingham and even Bristol having the footfall to support that.

A lot will depend on whether News Inter

rolls out its free city paper, because if it does, it will put even greater pressure on those centres that are already under pressure from losing sales.

We are well into it now [free edition, *MEN Lite*] and feel it was the right decision. We are distributing up to 80,000 in the city centre, getting the right age profile, demographics and the right ABC1 category, which is what the advertisers are after.

It's obviously going to have an effect on the paid-for, but that's now a balancing act.

Paul Horrocks is editor of the Manchester Evening News. Interview by Sarah Lagan

BROADCASTING, ADRIAN MONCK

Thanks to Jacques and Emir

This year's big new developments came courtesy of two powerful political figures — French president Jacques Chirac and the Emir of Qatar. France 24 and Al Jazeera English are both welcome newcomers to the international television stage. They are also a reminder of the continued role of state patronage in providing television news.

France 24 has ambitious expansion plans, to roll out news services in Arabic and Spanish. Al Jazeera English is struggling to get carriage in the US, but is at least available in the Pentagon. Next year the BBC returns to international TV news with its Arabic service, probably just in time for the last Black Hawk to leave Baghdad.

What these new services offer is not a route into a mass audience so much as a chance to remake the world in a way that doesn't depend on the view from Washington. That's both a strength and a weakness. The US is the default global power and the world's crises are defined as much by its involvement as its refusal to become involved. There is no tiptoeing around that particular fact. But in shining a light on areas of the world we aren't used to hearing from, except as charity cases, it is giving an opportunity to up the ante on reporting. Even if it isn't raising mass consciousness, it is filtering into newsrooms.

The real problems with both initiatives is that they are products in search of an audience. Neither could claim to be exactly what the people have been clamouring for. One is the result of despotic hubris, the other an inspired act of global positioning by the Emir of Qatar.

Adrian Monck is head of journalism at City University

MEDIA LAW, CAROLINE KEAN

Beginning of the end for "kiss and tell"

2006 was a year that started and finished with two cases that could change the tabloid landscape for ever... or not, depending on what happens in early '07.

In January, the court in *McKennitt vs Ash* published a judgment which incorporated the European Court's Princess Caroline judgment into the UK law for the first time. The court found that publishing pictures of her going about her private life (in public places) infringed her privacy. This was directly in contradiction to UK law at the time — in the Naomi Campbell case the courts had said that publishing photographs of her buying a bottle of milk would not be an invasion of privacy.

In *McKennitt*, a case involving Canadian singer Loreena McKennitt and her former friend Niema Ash, the UK court pronounced that there were areas of the lives of even those who have courted celebrity which were "off limits", even if they had put some information about themselves into the public domain already. *McKennitt's* home, and what went on there, was found to be completely off-limits. The concept of "false privacy" — that a claimant could be protected from publication of false facts about their private life — was introduced for the first time.

Finally, and in a volte face on the earliest privacy decisions, the court said that someone who wanted to tell their own story would not be allowed to do so simply because they were exercising their right to freedom of expression — there had to be a real public interest before they could publish. *McKennitt* obtained an injunction and damages, preventing Ash from publishing her story. The case has gone to appeal and the Court of Appeal's judgment is expected shortly.

The right of a celebrity to protect their private life laid down in *McKennitt* was reiterated in the case only last week of the mysterious footballer "CC" who obtained an injunction to stop the husband that he admitted cuckolding from selling his story. This is a 180-degree shift from 2002 when the prostitutes in the Jamie Theakston case had their right to publish their story upheld.

The judge considered that there were different

categories of free "speech" that needed to be protected in different ways and distinguished the two, allowing the husband to discuss his wife's adultery with his close friends or members of his family, his lawyers and counsellors, from his right to sell his story to the tabloids.

The judge considered there was no plain public interest in allowing him to tell this story, distinguishing between a tale of a footballer's adultery and the Profumo scandal, where he said such public interest would have been plain. Although the injunction granted is temporary, only lasting until the full trial on 12 February 2007, the judge referred specifically to the requirement that he should not grant an injunction at all unless he was satisfied the claimant would get an order in similar terms after the trial.

Until now, any celebrity who presented themselves as a caring family man, but was guilty of adultery, was fair game. The case of "CC" categorically denied that there was any general legal principle that there was no legitimate expectation of privacy for a person who conducts a relationship with another person's wife.

But while 2006 may have seen the beginning of the end of that tabloid mainstay, the "kiss and tell", another hearing — this time before the highest court in the UK, the House of Lords — has breathed new life into exposés, reportage and "responsible journalism".

Jameel vs Wall Street Journal was the first opportunity for the House of Lords to explain what it intended the 1999 Reynolds Defence and the concept of "responsible journalism" to mean for newspapers. Their Lordships seized the opportunity to reaffirm the "liberating intention" of Reynolds. In a judgment that recognised that allowance had to be made for editorial judgment exercised in the heat of the newsroom, and recognised that a nod and a wink from a genuine entrusted source might carry the same status as a statement on record, one judge observed: "We need more serious journalism in this country, and our defamation laws should encourage rather than discourage it".

Kiss and tell and "tittle tattle" journalism is clearly under threat from the courts going into 2007. Exposés in the public interest are not.

Caroline Kean is head of litigation at Wiggin

NEW MEDIA, NEIL MCINTOSH

The horseless carriages of social media

Blogging became big for the British media in 2006, only five years after our readers started doing it en masse. *The Times*, *Telegraph* and the BBC all launched new collections of blogs, and Guardian Unlimited rolled out Comment is free, sports blog and others to add to a stable of weblogs first launched in 2001.

We're proud of the journalism and user contributions on our sites. In contrast to other publishers' heavily policed environments, we took a risk by encouraging open debate from day one, and have been rewarded with huge interest. Blog traffic of 1.2 million page impressions in December 2005 grew to a record 7.1 million pages in July 2006 as the World Cup, and troubles in the Middle East, sparked lively discussion across our sites. Despite the huge flows of users, and the inevitable problems a minority of users can bring, the quality of the debate has been strong.

But let's not get too smug. For all the success we've enjoyed, the fact is blogs are the horseless carriages of social media, when fleet-footed rivals are already cranking out Model Ts. Social news sites such as Digg.com and Newsvine.com show how users don't just want to talk about the news — they'd quite like to decide what it is, or add to it because they happen to be experts in the subject at hand.

Myspace.com and Islandoo.com, to name but two, prove that vast communities of interest can spring up around mainstream media content. The conversations, properly nurtured, can end up being bigger — in scope and popularity — than the material that sparked them off.

This presents a huge challenge, and opportunity, for journalists. It's difficult for us to accept we might create sites that are only tangentially about our journalism. It's even harder to admit that, fanned by the viral winds that sweep the net, those conversations might be more popular than other things we produce.

On the flipside, our blog efforts — which will look primitive in only a year or two — prove there's a benefit to us in bringing our readers together. They're not always talking about our journalism, but often they are. Here's to 2007 being about looking at these new sites as a small price to pay for relevance in the scary, networked future.

Neil McIntosh is head of editorial development at Guardian Unlimited