

# HYPERLOCAL AND THE FUTURE OF NEWS

But in a week when The Times and The Sunday Times are about to go behind the paywall (i.e make surfers pay for the content they can see on the web) it is perhaps no better time to highlight the benefits of local journalism. The Guardian already have their local beatblogger Tom Allan on the ground in Edinburgh providing local news. The newspaper has seen that the way forward is to bring more useful news to the local people.



[Mashable](#) have a very interesting article listing five websites which they believe could reshape the future of news. One of those that they highlight is Wikileaks which proves that no information can be kept secret for ever, and which, for example, broke the news about procedures at Guantanamo Bay.

Radio 4 have also aired an illuminating discussion with Alan Rusbridger of The Guardian and his counterpart at The Sunday Times, John Witherow, debating the pay model against the subsidised model for newspaper websites. The pay model is as yet unproven but, with falling advertising revenues, it is difficult for newspapers to rely wholly on the subsidised alternative....

You can listen again on BBC Iplayer and you can access that [here](#).

It has just been announced that [The Guardian](#) is introducing what it calls Premium content for £25 a year...perhaps suggesting that Alan Rusbridger has finally been tempted to dip a toe in the water of paid content....?



Meanwhile the freelance news site Associated Content has announced its own exciting news:-

Yahoo! Inc. (NASDAQ: YH00) announced it has signed a definitive agreement to acquire Associated Content Inc. This strategic move extends Yahoo's ability to provide high quality, personally relevant content for the benefit of more than 600 million users as well as tens of thousands of advertisers. As Yahoo! enhances its social, mobile, local, and media offerings, the acquisition of Associated Content reinforces the company's longstanding promise to offer the best of the Web, by combining Associated Content's approximately 380,000 contributors who provide rich and varied content on a broad array of passion points, with Yahoo's leadership in partnering with established content brands and the award-winning team of editors and experts from Yahoo!.

"Combining our world-class editorial team with Associated Content's makes this a game-changer," said Carol Bartz, CEO, Yahoo! Inc. "Together, we'll create more content around what we know our users care about, and open up new and creative avenues for advertisers to engage with consumers across our network. These are important aspects of building engaging consumer experiences on Yahoo!, and one of the reasons why we're one of the most visited destinations online."



"The Associated Content team and our 380,000 contributors are looking forward to joining Yahoo!, and to the opportunities that being part of a global Internet brand presents," said Luke Beatty, Associated Content founder and president. "Combining our crowd sourced content with Yahoo!'s distribution, world class editorial team and online marketing leadership will accelerate our growth as we continue to leverage our best-of-breed platform to deliver high quality

compelling content on more than 60,000 topics.”

For advertisers, this deal will expand Yahoo! into more topic areas and real-time content generation. The combination promises to offer advertisers even more opportunities to engage groups of passionate consumers in ways they will find uniquely appealing to their interests and tastes. Having insight into user intent through its leading search products enables Yahoo! to identify topics important to advertisers and users. Yahoo! plans to use Associated Content to create content around those topics and leverage Associated Content to contribute content to existing media properties. Associated Content also provides more opportunities for Yahoo! to partner and collaborate with publishers who can help the company shape the tremendous variety of content coming in, into something bespoke and even more engaging.

While current Associated Content content is U.S.-centric, Yahoo! expects to scale the platform globally.

Associated Content was founded by Luke Beatty in Denver, Colorado, in 2004. Associated Content receives more than 16 million unique users per month (comScore) and the editorial staff reviews more than 50,000 pieces of content per month, including articles, images, audio and video. Yahoo! expects to complete this acquisition in the third quarter of 2010. Financial terms were not disclosed.

What do you think? Do you like accessing your news online? Or are you part of the population which likes the touchy-feeliness of a newspaper each morning? Give us your comments via the [Editors Blog](#).

Even the venerable Jon Snow has something to say about newspapers and the power of interactive journalism on his [Snowblog](#). His view is that all media – TV newspapers and radio

“are no longer God....”