

# iREPORT:

Participatory Media Joins a Global News Brand

---

*By Matt Hampel*

Case Studies 2008

MEDIA  
RE:PUBLIC



**Berkman**

The Berkman Center for Internet & Society  
at Harvard University

# iREPORT:

## Participatory Media Joins a Global News Brand

### SUMMARY

Billed as a location for “uncensored, unfiltered, unedited, user-generated community news,” the iReport.com site was launched in 2006 by cable TV news giant CNN. The site features photos, videos, and text on topics ranging from current events to personal stories and opinion submitted to the site by registered users, or “iReporters.” The iReport project has two distinct purposes for CNN. On the editorial side, it gives editors and producers a means to locate, select, and solicit audience-contributed media to help satisfy the near-infinite appetite of their multiple television channels and online products. For CNN—a business dependent for commercial success on the size of its audience—iReport.com, as a participatory media platform built around thousands of media clips submitted daily, is an online property that attracts significant traffic in its own right while also serving to promote the overall CNN brand.

In both its roles, iReport seems to be achieving significant traction. In-house producers use more of the audience-generated materials than many professional journalists would have predicted. Meanwhile, the standalone site, featuring only unmoderated audience submissions, has built a sizable audience of its own, despite having no defined editorial mission.

### HISTORY

CNN’s iReport (originally called “I-Report”) was launched in August 2006 as a project to collect citizen-generated media for potential use by CNN programs. Initially created as a section of CNN.com, the project was spurred in large part by an influx of amateur video and photos submitted in the wake of the Asian tsunami.<sup>1</sup> The iReport.com standalone website launched two years later, on February 14, 2008,<sup>2</sup> and was promoted from beta status in August 2008.<sup>3</sup>

When iReport was launched, it consisted of a set of upload forms on CNN.com that invited users to submit breaking news.<sup>4</sup> The original site and the larger iReport.com were both created by small teams at CNN.com lead by Lila King. King, whose title is Senior Producer for Interactive Storytelling, remains at the helm. Since 2006, the core iReport staff has grown to 10—up from five and a half in February 2008.<sup>5</sup>

### BUSINESS MODEL

CNN funds and runs iReport as a project, not as a distinct business, and does not disclose separate financial information about it. Advertising on the iReport.com site consists of two sizes of rectangular ads that are available on all pages. Specifications are clearly posted<sup>6</sup> and can include animation, video, and animations that move across the content portion of the page for a short time. Ads appear in the lefthand column of the site and are not tied to content; spots appearing on the site in mid-2008 promoted cosmetics or were cross-property advertisements pointing users towards other CNN products. At the launch of the site, there were no plans to add pre- or post-roll video ads to user-contributed materials.<sup>7</sup>

### Protecting the CNN Brand

In 2007, CNN reportedly paid domain name speculator Rick Schwartz \$750,000 for iReport.com and i-Report.com.<sup>8</sup> According to CNN business development director Chris Press, the move to a domain name separate from CNN.com gave iReport an “area that was distinct from CNN but allied [to it].”<sup>9</sup>

The site uses graphics and text to distinguish between the CNN brand and the majority of content on the site. The “on CNN” stamp distinguishes the few pieces that have been aired or posted on a CNN property from those that have not been vetted by CNN. The CNN logo and name are not used in the iReport logo or in the site’s tagline or page titles. The design of the site loosely follows CNN conventions by using rounded corners, a similar typeface, and the same icons for photos and video. Otherwise, there is no strong design indication that the site is a CNN property, and the CNN logo only appears in the lower-right corner of pages and on content that has been used by the network.

This separation has allowed CNN to experiment and collect accolades for the project while keeping its traditional network content distinct. I-Reporter (as it was then styled) was included in the *New York Times* 2007 list of “Buzzwords”<sup>10</sup> and in May 2008, CNN won the Knight News Innovation “EPpy” award from Editors and Publishers in large part because of iReport. The award, which has also been given to Minnesota Public Radio and American Public Media for their work with crowdsourcing, recognizes “new ways of gathering or distributing news or information.”<sup>11</sup>

## EDITORIAL MODEL

With only the most basic standards for content, iReport.com welcomes a wide spectrum of videos, photos, text, and audio reports submitted by users. Users may post anything that doesn't contain pornography, hate speech, disturbingly violent behavior, and that doesn't infringe on copyright.<sup>12</sup> Business development director Chris Press described iReport as "like YouTube, but with a focus on personal reporting,"<sup>13</sup> and like contributors to the video-sharing site, iReporters are not compensated for the material they submit.

The iReport.com front page features content sorted by popularity, age, comments and other factors, without any intervention from the iReport editorial team. A large *Newsiest Now* box is populated automatically with 12 teasers for user-generated content based on a combination of criteria. Pieces end up in the newsiest box based on an algorithm that weights factors from whether the piece has been used by on CNN to several popularity—number of views, number of comments, and user ratings.<sup>14</sup> One day in mid-2008 featured a 102-second video of presidential candidate John McCain's campaign bus after an accident (footage that was used on CNN), an audio report about a recent Facebook redesign, and a still photo of a dachshund accompanying a user's narrative of her back-to-school experience, among other pieces.

At the launch of iReport.com in 2008, Susan Grant, executive vice president of CNN news services, said, "We are not going to discourage or encourage anything."<sup>15</sup> The site does, however, feature an *Assignment Desk* section, where suggested topics for iReporters are posted. The topics follow

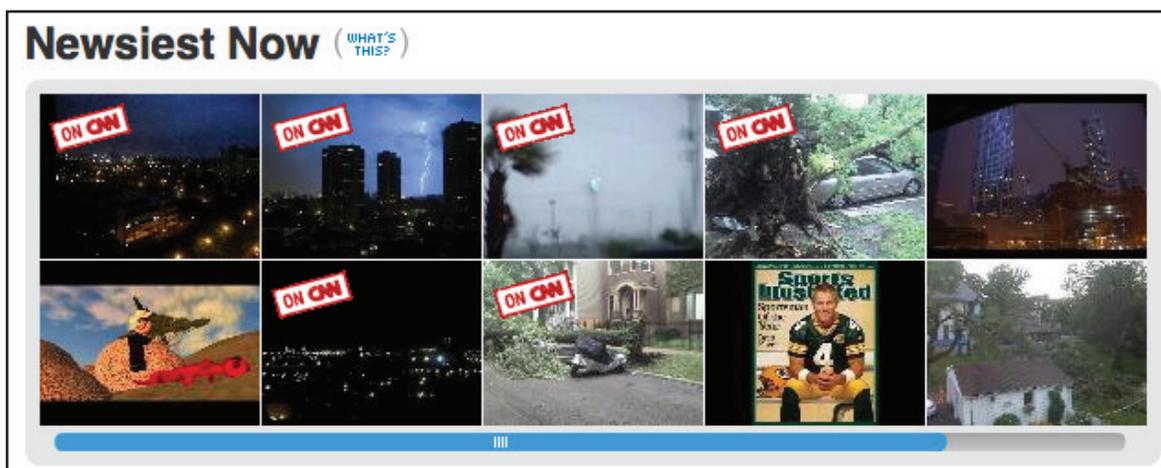
CNN's stories of the day and are proposed by CNN producers, not by the site's users (in contrast with sites like NowPublic, on which the editorial priorities are set in large part by the users). The iReport team posts new assignments to the site on a daily basis."<sup>16</sup> Assignments are often posted as short questions, with one or two sentences of description:

Drilling, the best option?

President Bush lifted an executive order banning offshore oil drilling on Monday and urged Congress to follow suit. Share your thoughts. Is it worth it to look for oil on U.S. coastlines and wildlife refuges? What other options does the U.S. have? Put your comments on video.<sup>17</sup>

After registering on the site, iReporters can submit content by uploading materials via the Web or by sending mobile messages to an iReport email address. The content submitted includes a broad range of genres: personal narratives, political opinion, breaking news, firsthand reports on any number of topics, social commentary, travel photos, and humor.

While the first iReport submission ever used by CNN—a squirrel in the sun during a heat wave—was far from weighty, iReport has had successes in collecting original footage of breaking news. When a bulldozer driver struck a bus in Jerusalem in July 2008 (the second such incident in a month), an iReporter quickly uploaded photos from the scene.<sup>18</sup> His work appeared on CNN.com nearly an hour before the *New York Times* had coverage on its site. An iReporter sent in pictures of the 2007 Minnesota bridge collapse, and later



Each assignment is accompanied by a large “Share your story” button.

Home > Assignment desk > topic

## Black in America

Thank you for the tremendous response to CNN's documentary television series and online event, [Black in America](#). We hope you will help us continue this important conversation.

It's your turn to tell the story of Black in America. Many of you who commented on iReport.com and CNN.com said you felt the documentary didn't address the issues most important to you.

So grab your camera and tell us — better yet, **show us** your story. Make a video diary documenting your experiences being black in America.

Tags: [black\\_in\\_america](#)

[Share your story](#)



spoke by phone about what he saw on CNN's *The Situation Room*.<sup>19</sup> Users also sent in photos and videos from the 2007 and 2008 California wildfires. The majority of breaking-news footage has a first-person look and feel, says King, and material almost always complements, rather than replacing, professional CNN reporting.

### Getting On CNN

Content posted to iReport.com appears on the site nearly immediately, but producers must find and vet content before it appears on a CNN property. King says that iReport works best when “a show or segment producer or a writer . . . looks to iReport for something that would add significantly to [her/his] project.”<sup>20</sup> CNN staff have tools to search through the submitted media and view users' contact information. A CNN staff person then calls and interviews the user about the material. The vetting and fact-checking guidelines are the same that are applied to any source. “What's most important is that we maintain the integrity of CNN's news gathering efforts . . . I don't think [iReport] would work without it,” says King.<sup>21</sup>

When vetting material, staff aim to confirm that the material is original and collect background information about the work. Beyond the terms of service that users must agree to, staff do not inform them of their rights to the content or ask them to give away additional rights if their content airs on CNN.<sup>22</sup> Once a piece makes the cut, the CNN interface has various output methods—content can be sent directly to the TV, web, and radio production systems with the click of a button.<sup>23</sup>

When vetting content, King says staff do come across “a few . . . innocent issues,” generally situations where an iReporter has altered a photograph. In one instance, a user re-uploaded several striking photos of a storm to the site to show that he had made only contrast and brightness adjustments to the image. In his repost, the reporter wrote:

I am resending these photos to CNN by the request of someone who called me from CNN. In their original form. To show that I did indeed increase the contrast and brightness as to see the image better.

I hope that in doing so that I have not misled anyone into thinking these photos were not real. . . . I was asked how I got the photos. . . . I do apologize if my slight increasing of the contrast and lighting to better improve the image may have misled anyone. But I can assure everyone that these photos are the real thing. And I hope that this was not the reason that they were removed from CNN's iReport.<sup>24</sup>

His original photos were approved to appear on CNN.

The site has faced some challenges with unreliable content. In a blog post titled “Unedited. Unfiltered. Untrue,” a user tells how he posted a fake news item about a “wild haggis hunt” in Scotland and gamed the view counts on his piece by refreshing the page, which promoted his article to “newsiest now.”<sup>25</sup> The viewcount algorithm was fixed less than a month later, but the false content remained on the site.<sup>26</sup>

Unsurprisingly, there are many attempts to use iReport to disseminate promotional content. Some amount of spam is posted by bots, or users automatically registered by a computer program; that advertising manifests as promotional user images (“CLICK HERE! AUTO LOAN”) and profiles that have links to other sites. These are quickly removed by iReport moderators.

More insidious are comments and submissions by humans, not robots, that directly and indirectly market services. On a post about identity theft that was featured on CNN, a user commented with a marketing pitch: “If you would like information on how to be proactive and protect you[r]self from Identity Theft before during and after the crime [ . . . visit my website]”<sup>27</sup>

One marketer who also is a “superstar” iReporter told the Public Journalism Network in an interview that she posted stories from clients to the site.<sup>28</sup> Another user said that he posts content as an experiment to see what is popular, and uses the results to inform his own work developing social networks.<sup>29</sup> Other users post promotional links in the signatures that appear after their comments.

## Popular Topics

A presentation by social media expert Robin Hamman at the Digital News Affairs conference in March 2008 reported that nearly 100,000 iReports had been submitted in the project's

first 18 months, and about 10% made it to CNN.com or CNN TV.<sup>30</sup> Weather and weather damage is consistently popular with CNN editors. Of 40 pieces surveyed on a summer day, 13 (about 32%) were about natural disasters, including lightning, thunderstorms, flooding, and wildfires. “Feeling flooded with flood images myself,” said one user about the focus on weather coverage.<sup>31</sup> In the same sample, about half (19 of 40) of the pieces of content were submitted by the top users, or “superstar” iReporters.

International content does get submitted to the site, but rarely floats to the “newsiest” list, unless it is related to a high-profile news story. The conflict in Georgia in August 2008 brought a large number of photos and some video, along with extensive comment threads. Photos of Tibet protests, earthquakes in the Sichuan province, and the 2008 Olympics also appeared. A news map, launched in 2008, shows where around the world stories and their authors come from. The majority of stories originate from the United States.

Political opinion posts are popular on the site and often generate long discussion threads, dominates the “most commented” section,<sup>32</sup> but are rarely used by CNN. *The Situation Room* has been one of the more innovative programs in its use of the project, says King. When hosting big-name politicians like Barack Obama or John McCain, the political segment of the weekday news program will air video questions sent in by iReporters. CNN's *Morning Express* regularly airs user-submitted messages from families of U.S. troops serving abroad.<sup>33</sup>

Because of the post-moderated nature of the site, in which all comments are posted immediately but can be flagged for staff review, discussions often turn heated. After the death of former White House Press Secretary Tony Snow from cancer in 2008, the iReport Assignment Desk asked users to submit responses to the story. Many of the posts and ensuing discussions were filled with vitriol, such as one entitled “Good Riddance,” which garnered more than 100 comments, many of them back-and-forth *ad hominem* attacks written in all capital letters.<sup>34</sup>

Users can rate posts with stars, which seem to function more as part of the community aspects of the site rather as a feedback directed at CNN staff who might select materials for use elsewhere. Some users have expressed anger about users who intentionally disrupt the community (“trolls” in the jargon of online communities), routinely giving their posts zero stars. One user claimed that others would go through their posts

*A world map displays the location of recent reports.*



one by one, underrating all of them because of an unspecified disagreement.<sup>35</sup> Another user wrote:

Star rating is more of a concept function that anything that reveals something. In the same way someone might give you a 5 that may not be deserving. Like many have given me when I clearly did not deserve it.<sup>36</sup>

Yet, there are a select few that go around just to knock stories down.

In the end the function is nearly useless and is hardly reflective of anything whatsoever.<sup>37</sup>

## On the CNN network

The main CNN site has an iReport section<sup>38</sup> that features some of the latest content and lists assignments for iReporters. The content appearing on the site trended towards opinion and entertainment—a typical listing of “iReports on CNN” on CNN.com featured user-created video and photos from the running of the bulls festival in Pamplona, firsthand photos and video from California wildfires, and “Your fun photos.” Meanwhile,

the Assignment Desk posed some timely opinion questions: “Who should be VP?” and “What is patriotism?”

In addition, many CNN.com stories invite submissions of related content or comments on iReport.com, and the CNN.com homepage often highlights iReport pieces in its “Latest News” rotation. Pieces on CNN.com often solicit users to submit responses on iReport.com. “When something is written by a journalist or an engaging picture is posted, people are motivated to send in what they have,” says King.<sup>39</sup>

In addition to materials solicited via the main site, individual programs and the Assignment Desk, the iReport team also works to push iReport materials. They monitor the “newsiest now” list and other popularity indicators on the site, and will pitch user submissions to CNN producers in news agenda meetings. They also send out several internal emails a day summarizing what’s new and popular on the site.<sup>40</sup>

## Support for iReporters

To help users produce content, the toolkit section of the site provides short collections of tips about storytelling (who, what, where, when, why, and how), photography (use the rule of thirds), videography (make sure to have lots of B-roll), and audio work (hold the microphone firmly). In the audio section,

40–50 rights-cleared music clips are provided in sections such as news, drama, and sports. iReporters are encouraged to use these clips and discouraged from using unlicensed music.

The quality of video on the site ranges from shaky raw footage to professional quality videography and editing.<sup>41</sup> Some pieces are simply pans around a scene. Few are significantly edited, and fewer still appear to have been made by people with training. The majority constitute a single shot or short clips strung together, like a 5-minute video of a Critical Mass biking rally showing police arresting cyclists that has received over 120,000 views.<sup>42</sup>

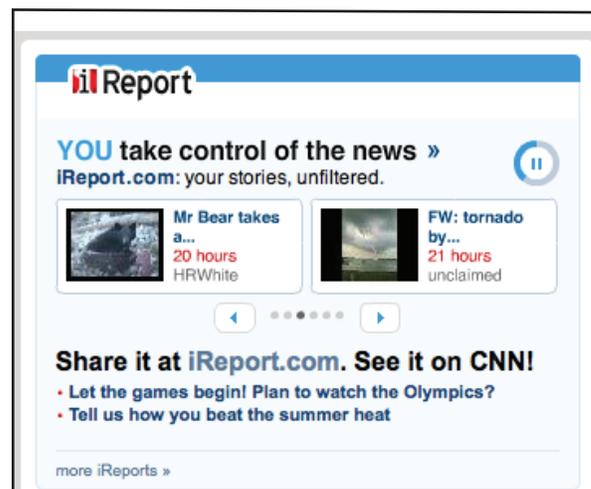
When posting material, users can check a “discretion advised” checkbox, which blocks the images or videos with a black box that viewers must click to remove. For example, a user who posted a photo of decomposing bodies after the Myanmar cyclone veiled it.<sup>43</sup> Because there is no way of signaling the reason for the warning, usage varies widely; one photo that was covered with the warning turned out to be an image of a couple holding cocktails.<sup>44</sup>

Materials submitted by different users are each treated as distinct items. Unlike sites like NowPublic, users cannot easily attach the work of others to their submissions. When uploading content, users can select an option to make their work available for others to download, but this feature allows users to access only highly compressed versions of images. Despite this, some users are concerned about others plagiarizing content.<sup>45</sup>

In November 2007, iReport opened a “hub” in Second Life,<sup>46</sup> where users of the virtual world can upload reports about virtual events. These appear on iReport’s Second Life assignment page, and on CNN.com’s Second Life blog.<sup>47</sup> On the in-game CNN property, users can view iReport videos and acquire CNN-branded objects for their avatars. iReport organizes weekly virtual training sessions in these areas on photojournalism, reporting, and storytelling. CNN producers and editors will occasionally hold Q-and-A sessions in the space, which usually attract about 20 visitors.<sup>48</sup>

## COMMUNITY

“At CNN we argue a lot about what’s news. . . . But over on our new site, iReport.com, we’re trying something different.”<sup>49</sup> wrote Lila King on a CNN blog. The site offers CNN viewers a way to submit content and get feedback: “[Users] would send



stuff to us and they would never get to see it on the Web or the screen,” said CNN business development director Chris Press. “The aim was to create a separate community for our [citizen journalists] and then enable the site to develop its own personality and functionality.”<sup>50</sup> On the original iReport section of CNN.com, users could submit media but not see what others had sent in. iReport.com removes what King calls the “black box,” allowing users to rate, comment on, and promote the content.<sup>51</sup>

More than 10,000 users joined in the first month after the site launched,<sup>52</sup> and by August 2008, the userbase had grown to nearly 90,000. Of those, about 24,000 had uploaded a story, and the average contributor has sent in two stories.<sup>53</sup> The top 20% of iReporters on the site earn the “superstar” label, which puts them in a special section in the user listing section of the site and adds a red superstar badge to their submissions.<sup>54</sup> It’s “a visible award and acknowledgment,” says King.<sup>55</sup> The ranking is generated each week by calculating a score based on “members’ contributions, ratings, popularity and site activity.”<sup>56</sup> As of mid-August (2008), more than 700 superstars were listed on the site, up from 505 in mid-July.

Surprisingly, even most superstars have zero or one pieces that have aired on CNN. Some earn the ranking by submitting one or two pieces of high-quality content and never posting again, and others post pieces daily. Few of the superstars produce reports with consistently high production or news value, and fewer still regularly produce content that appears on the network.

The staff at iReport actively engage with the iReport.com community about site- and content-related issues. The top superstars regularly comment on each others’ work and are active on the iReport blog, and King says they are “in almost

constant contact with many of them,” via phone, email, the site’s messaging system (which allows users to contact each other directly), and Twitter.<sup>57</sup> Staff have asked for input on how to rank superstars and minimize trolling and harassment.

The iReport blog,<sup>58</sup> written by a number of CNN staff, serves to highlight good content and solicit feedback on site features. Posts are light and conversational—one on spam begins “Mmm . . . hope you’re hungry, because we’ve got some salty, meaty food for thought.” Moderation on the blog is light; that same post, which solicited users to “take this opportunity to tell us what kinds of content seems like spam” accumulated a number of spam comments of its own.<sup>59</sup>

## Abuse and Hacking

There is no meta-discussion area on the site for users apart from the blog, but users create iReports with no news content that serve as community discussion threads. These discussions feature titles like “LOT’S [sic] OF SPAM ON IREPORT.”<sup>60</sup>

As is common on many social media sites,<sup>61</sup> abusive comments are perceived as a problem by the community. One user writes: “I made a somewhat innocuous comment in regards to a recent story on a bobcat and I got an email from [username] saying he would like to track me down and kill me.”<sup>62</sup> In an interview, one user who writes about medical topics frequently feels hurt by the comments made on her pieces, and other users echo her sentiments. Logged-in users can flag content and comments that they deem abusive. The third-party moderator that iReport has contracted reviews flagged content and can remove it from public view.

Alleged hacking was a concern on the site in mid-2008. In another instance, when one user accused another of being a hacker, the accused created a thread about the topic where frequent contributors discussed the issue.<sup>63</sup> Although similar incidents have caused a stir among a community of superstar users, they seem to have little effect on the day-to-day operation of the site; the flow of content to the site continues, and most of the pieces that appear on CNN come from first-time users.

In contrast to sites like Newsvine, which pays its contributors a share of ad revenue, or Current.tv, which buys rights for all materials used, or the Associated Press, which continues its pre-Internet tradition of paying amateurs for materials, iReport offers its contributors no compensation

beyond a sense of belonging and the pride of seeing their work appear on CNN. If the content is licensed to a third party, CNN will share an (undisclosed) portion of the fees with the iReporter.<sup>64</sup> CNN staff will share URLs with contributors so they can see how their work was used online, but there are no systems to give data on estimated network views or to provide video clips of the content as it appeared on-air. Contributors are sometimes sent a small gift, often a T-shirt. The iReport team doesn’t have any immediate plans to pay users for their submissions, and a CNN spokeswoman would not say if any users have been paid in the past.<sup>65</sup>

In contrast to nonprofit news organizations like the *Chi-Town Daily News*, contributors to iReport realize that their work benefits a large corporation. These issues are discussed regularly in the superstar community—one user who regularly submits reports says that it will be difficult for her to continue if she is not paid for her work,<sup>66</sup> but doesn’t seem to have slowed the continuing flow of contributions to the site.

## TECHNOLOGY

The launch of iReport brought some minor technical problems, according to users interviewed, and the iReport team continues to refine the site’s functionality. Feedback from users prioritizes what parts of the site are changed, says King.<sup>67</sup> One early addition to the was the ability to edit posts, a feature users clamored for; more recently, the team launched a mapping feature that shows stories as pins on a map of the earth.

The core iReport team draws on centralized CNN resources, so it is difficult to estimate the number of hours spent on developing the system. The public-facing areas of the content management system were coded in Java. Uploads are stored in a system that can scale to accommodate a “nearly infinite” amount of content. As of August 2008, the site held nearly 320GB of photos, video, audio, and text.<sup>68</sup> The team continues to roll out frequent upgrades to the site.

## CONCLUSION

CNN’s iReport is clearly popular with its online audience. According to a Mediaweek report, the site served nearly 4 million video streams and 2.5 million users<sup>69</sup> visited the site in June 2008, an increase of 22% over the previous month.

As iReport.com continues to receive a stream of high-level attention from CNN.com executives, its materials are used by producers from a number of prime-time shows. “We are honored to provide an online destination for [our audience] to engage with the news and each other in a meaningful way,” said CNN.com senior vice president Mitch Gelman in a comment to the Knight Foundation.<sup>70</sup>

There is little question that iReport should be considered a success for CNN, though calculating the financial benefit from either the materials used on-air or the value of its effect in building audience is an inexact science. That the company has figured out how to incorporate audience contributions in a way that adds vast amounts of inexpensive content to its inventory without threatening the integrity of the news brand is impressive. In terms of enhancing public discourse, it is hard to consider iReport to be revolutionizing CNN—creative producers may use the mechanism in interesting ways, but the impact on overall editorial practice for such a behemoth is small. In terms of the standalone site itself, its emphasis on being unedited means that it doesn’t take advantage of its ties to a news organization to educate its audience on journalistic practice, which may be a missed opportunity, or the best way to find and keep the enthusiastic contributors they want.

Matt Hampel (<http://matth.org>) is a student at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> <http://journalists.org/2007/conference/archives/000881.php>

<sup>2</sup> [http://news.cnet.com/8301-17939\\_109-9872781-2.html?hbTest=1](http://news.cnet.com/8301-17939_109-9872781-2.html?hbTest=1)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/blogs/ireport-blog/2008/08/07/bye-bye-beta>

<sup>4</sup> Lila King, phone interview.

<sup>5</sup> Lila King, phone interview.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/adspec.jspa>

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.mediaweek.com/mw/news/interactive/article\\_display.jsp?vnu\\_content\\_id=1003708936](http://www.mediaweek.com/mw/news/interactive/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=1003708936)

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.dnjournal.com/archive/lowdown/2008/dailyposts/01-17-08.htm>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.journalism.co.uk/2/articles/531124.php>

<sup>10</sup> It was defined as “CNN’s name for citizen journalists who submit their own photographs and reports about news events.” <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/23/weekinreview/23buzzwords.html>

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.knightfoundation.org/news/press\\_room/knight\\_press\\_releases/detail.dot?id=329540](http://www.knightfoundation.org/news/press_room/knight_press_releases/detail.dot?id=329540)

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/guidelines.jspa>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.journalism.co.uk/2/articles/531124.php>

<sup>14</sup> *ireport.com* description

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.mediaweek.com/mw/news/interactive/article\\_display.jsp?vnu\\_content\\_id=1003708936](http://www.mediaweek.com/mw/news/interactive/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=1003708936)

<sup>16</sup> Lila King, phone interview.

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/ir-topic-stories.jspa?topicId=36826>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/docs/DOC-48316>

<sup>19</sup> Lila King, phone interview.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Lila King, phone interview; iReport users, phone interviews.

<sup>23</sup> Lila King, phone interview.

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/docs/DOC-45862>

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.scunnered.com/?p=9>

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/docs/DOC-1847>

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/docs/DOC-56385>

<sup>28</sup> <http://pjnet.org/post/1814/>

<sup>29</sup> iReport user, phone interview.

<sup>30</sup> [http://blip.tv/file/718944\\_3:10](http://blip.tv/file/718944_3:10)

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/docs/DOC-32929>

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/index.jspa?secondarySortBy=alltime&sortBy=commented&sortOrder=2&filterBy=>

<http://www.ireport.com/index.jspa?secondarySortBy=alltime&sortBy=commented&sortOrder=2&filterBy=>

<sup>33</sup> Lila King, phone interview.

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/docs/DOC-45437>

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/docs/DOC-17143>

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/blogs/ireport-blog/2008/07/15/be-nice-yall>

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/blogs/ireport-blog/2008/07/15/be-nice-yall?ref=feeds%2Fblogs%2Fireport-blog>

<sup>38</sup> <http://edition.cnn.com/ireport/>

<sup>39</sup> <http://journalists.org/2007/conference/archives/000881.php>

<sup>40</sup> Lila King, phone interview.

<sup>41</sup> See <http://www.ireport.com/docs/DOC-54148> for a good-quality, well-produced example.

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/docs/DOC-40338>

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/docs/DOC-23550>

<sup>44</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/docs/DOC-52353>

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/docs/DOC-47501>

<sup>46</sup> <http://www.cnnasiapacific.com/press/en/content/303/>

<sup>47</sup> <http://secondlife.blogs.cnn.com>

<sup>48</sup> Lila King, phone interview.

<sup>49</sup> <http://behindthescenes.blogs.cnn.com/2008/03/31/yeab-but-is-it-news-on-ireportcom-thats-your-call/>

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.journalism.co.uk/2/articles/531124.php>

<sup>51</sup> Lila King, phone interview.

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/blogs/ireport-blog/2008/03/27/were-growing-fast>

<sup>53</sup> Varga-Sinka, personal email.

<sup>54</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/people?range=12&start=0&view=superstar>

<sup>55</sup> Lila King, phone interview.

<sup>56</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/people?range=12&start=0&view=superstar>

<sup>57</sup> Lila King phone interview.

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/blogs/ireport-blog>

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/blogs/ireport-blog/2008/07/29/spam-its-not-just-canned-meat>

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/docs/DOC-55921>

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/03/magazine/03trolls-t.html>

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/docs/DOC-55966>

<sup>63</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/docs/DOC-48879>

<sup>64</sup> <http://www.ireport.com/terms.jspa>

<sup>65</sup> Lila King, interview.

<sup>66</sup> ZB, phone interview.

<sup>67</sup> Lila King, phone interview.

<sup>68</sup> Karen E. Varga-Sinka, personal email.

<sup>69</sup> *This puts it on a par with the sites of large metro daily newspapers, and is not insignificant when compared to cnn.com's nearly 30 million monthly visitors.*

<sup>70</sup> [http://www.knightfoundation.org/news/press\\_room/knight\\_press\\_releases/detail.dot?id=329540](http://www.knightfoundation.org/news/press_room/knight_press_releases/detail.dot?id=329540)