

# COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

## **The News Frontier: CJR's News Innovation Desk**

It's an anxious but exhilarating time for journalists. As the Web topples many of the assumptions we've held about the media—and as it topples news organizations themselves—the ensuing tumult also offers exciting opportunities for entrepreneurship and self-reinvention. *Columbia Journalism Review's* news innovation beat trains its focus on the changing media landscape, offering critical analysis of the news business as it undergoes its rapid evolution online, in print, and on the air.

Since we established the beat in January 2009, our coverage has included: a critique of the first press conference conducted via Twitter; a real-time analysis of the differences between cable news and Web outlets in the coverage of January's Hudson River crash landing; a comparison of the differing methods that Web-based and print outlets have been using to parse the text of the stimulus bill; a report on ProPublica's experiment with crowd-sourced journalism; and an exploration of Global Post, the new online-only outlet for international news coverage—a piece GlobalPost CEO Phil Balboni called, in an e-mail, “the most comprehensive, thoughtful and well written piece about GlobalPost that has been done by anyone including all of the major media.”

This fall, CJR launched an ambitious new series called Press Forward: Dialogues on the Future of News. Over the next few months, via essays, interviews, and case studies, CJR writers will address various aspects of communications across traditional and emerging media—the derivation of authority, the construction of narrative, the reinvention of expertise, and so on. A better understanding of the definite properties of the news and the Net will lead to better ideas about how to bring the two together.

Though it's a sentiment you don't often hear among the media these days, CJR is invigorated by the challenges facing journalism, and optimistic that opportunities lie hidden within them. In its dual role as contributor and counselor to the media's discussion about journalism and its future, our news innovation beat plays a vital role in fulfilling the mission CJR has embraced since its founding in 1961: "to encourage and stimulate excellence in journalism in the service of a free society."