



Traditional media and user-generated content

Traditional media outlets started to regularly publish content from the web. CNN's so-called "distraction page" is shown below...

Why is this happening? Clearly, even serious national media outlets cannot afford to lose out on the huge amount of user-generated content that is available every day. Importantly, some of this content becomes major news (e.g. the famous "gangnam style" song that has been seen by over half a billion users and generated a lot of debates beyond simple entertainment). In this domain, however, it is not clear that traditional media outlets have advantage over websites that are specialized on monitoring the Web for emerging stories. Barriers to entry are low and whether one hits the right stories largely depends on luck at least for now.

It is interesting to see what will be the long-term result of this competition? Will traditional, "serious" news, generated by professional reporters survive the era of user-generated content? Maybe yes. If competition between online news sites doesn't manage to reduce the noise or creates even more of it, then there will definitely remain some place for, what people call, "serious news". Under another scenario however, competition may lead to a much better selection of relevant stuff from the noise in which case it is going to be difficult for professionals to compete with user-generated content. Suspense!

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