

# PROFILE Breaking news online



"When I started, I was told this is 24 hours a day, seven days a week. And I laughed. Now I'm not too sure it was a joke."

Adam Desiderio '05 laughs again. The 29-year-old associate producer with the "NBC Nightly News" is like a lot of journalists. He disarms quickly by poking fun at himself and speaking plainly about almost anything. Being a bit over 6 foot 3 inches tall with a handsome face and thoughtful demeanor doesn't hurt either. The package seems just right for NBC's flagship news show.

Desiderio is one of some six young Seton Hall University alumni working across NBC's news outlets at a time of incredible tumult. Like most media, the fabled "peacock network" is remaking itself for the digital age. This summer alone, it launched NBCLatino.com, used mobile apps to supplement its London Olympics coverage, and bought Microsoft's 50 percent stake in MSNBC.com.



The result is a constant if soft drumbeat for these new alumni to reinvent themselves just as swiftly.

"You have to be really nimble," says Robert Windrem '68, a senior investigative producer who covers terrorism for the "NBC Nightly News."

When Windrem started in 1980, he could only tell a story by airing a piece on the evening news, the early morning "Today" show, or a prime-time news magazine. Now he also regularly produces Web news videos, writes for MSNBC.com (now NBCnews.com), and discusses international security as a guest on NBC's various cable news networks.

"Everyone understands these opportunities exist," says Windrem, 67.

Brian Wisowaty '11 agrees. In June, after just a year at MSNBC as a graphics production assistant, the 23-year-old was asked to oversee visuals for the prime-time show, "PoliticsNation." That means he coordinates the senior producers who decide what information to illustrate and the artists who make it look good. Wisowaty ensures they both hit the mark.

"This is no longer something that just flashes up on-screen," he says. Show producers are now posting his images to Facebook in order to connect with the social network's 950 million members.

**24/7:** Brian Wisowaty '11 works tirelessly to keep a famous news outlet up-to-date in a world of ever-evolving technologies

The move offers a tangible reminder that digital media is changing TV.

By the early 2000s, many predicted the Internet would put an end to it. That never happened. But the Internet's popularity also never stopped growing. Each spurt pushes TV news to change just a little bit more. The results can be quite dramatic.

Betty Nevins '77, senior production manager for "Meet the Press," offers a good example. The famed Sunday morning political program has developed an original Web video series named "PRESS Pass." It only takes six or so people to create each segment. That's a far cry from the roughly 28 people Nevins, 56, leads each week to broadcast the main program nationally.

"They're breaking the mold," says the 27-year NBC veteran.

By redefining what qualifies as professional-grade video, "Meet the Press" can afford to recruit new viewers online with stories it normally couldn't do. For instance, host David Gregory was able to interview actress Sigourney Weaver in July about her new cable mini-series, "Political Animals."

It's an evolution that Erin Ganley '09 navigates daily. As a line producer for MSNBC's "The Ed Schultz Show," her days begin with the creation of a show schedule and end in a rush to get people to stick to it during broadcast. That doesn't always leave the 25-year-old as much time to focus on the Internet as she'd like.

"I don't think it has as much of a role with the job I have right now," she says. But she's sure it will in the future, so she keeps up with digital media on her own.

Take her use of Twitter, the online social network that relays news in 140 character bursts. Ganley frequently scans it to filter through the day's top stories.

She may be on to something. In July, corporate parent Comcast reorganized NBC by creating the NBCUniversal News Group to house all of its broadcast, cable, and Internet news outlets under one chairman. The goal: increase collaboration.

It's the type of step forward that keeps Stephanie Wightman '08 excited about TV. Like all her young alumni-colleagues, the 26-year-old tape producer for "1st Look," an early morning NBC news show, is always keen to adapt to change gracefully.

As she says: "You've got to go where the future is." ■

| JAMES ERIK ABELS



**Broadcasting the Future:** Stephanie Wightman '08 (outside the 30 Rockefeller Plaza building) embraces new forms of communication to better connect with NBC audiences.