Invited Talk

News in the Age of the Web

Krishna Bharat

Principal Scientist, Google Inc.

Abstract

One of the most exciting and successful examples of the Web impacting society is online news. The history of the news industry from print to the online medium is an interesting journey. Broadcast news transformed society by making news available instantly rather than once a day. While more channels became available, barriers to entry remained high and mainstream opinions continued to dominate. News on the net has brought in a number of valuable transformations, allowing news to be made (potentially) more accessible, diverse, democratic, personalized and interactive than before. Blogging has now made "citizen reporting" possible. As with any disruptive technology online news has both positive and negative implications, such as the threat of disinformation. Computer assisted news is a fun area of research that draws upon prior work in information retrieval, data mining and user interfaces. Given the volume of online news being generated today, the ability to find news and related facts quickly and with high relevance affects both readers and journalists. The talk will address the social implications as well as the technical challenges in the dissemination of online news, with a focus on Google News. Google News is an automated service that makes over 4,500 online, English sources searchable and browseable in real time, with an emphasis on breadth of coverage.

Biographical Notes

Krishna is a Principal Scientist at Google Inc, working in area of UI and algorithmic support for Web search and content analysis (Web Information Retrieval). He graduated with a Ph.D. in Computer Science from Georgia Tech in 1996 and a B. Tech from IIT-Madras in 1991. Before joining Google in 1999, he was a member of the research staff at DEC Systems Research Center in Palo Alto, CA. In 2002 he created Google News (http://news.google.com/) a computer generated newspaper that unifies news from online newspapers worldwide with an emphasis on diversity and balance. Krishna currently heads Google's R&D Center in Bangalore, India, which he helped establish in 2004. This is part of Google's worldwide engineering campus which includes centers in Tokyo and Zurich.