News on the net excites journalists, refuels interest in job

PC MIKE

MIKE WENDLAND

Last weekend in St. Petersburg, Fla., nearly two dozen of the nation's leading reporters gathered to discuss the future of investigative reporting. We half-jokingly called it an "online news summit."

While there was a lot of spirited debate and discussion, everyone agreed on one thing: The Internet is the best thing to happen to journalism in a very long time. Maybe since the printing press.

Really.

I don't want to use this column to bore you with inside information and gossip from journalists but I do want to let you in on the group's conclusions in a general way because they bear directly on what consumers will soon be seeing online.

Most of the reporters, ranging in age from late twenty-somethings to those in their mid-fifties, have never been more excited about their jobs. And while most were clearly pessimistic about the current state of journalism at traditional newspapers and broadcast stations (for pretty much the same reasons the public is fed up with the media today), they all believed that the Internet is leading to better and more in-depth, relevant reporting.

Those in attendance came, on their own, from newspapers like the New York Times, journalism organizations like Investigative Reporters and editors and media conglomerates like Knight Ridder. There were reporters from online publications like Salon (www.salon.com), WebMD (www.webmd.com) and the police and crime reporting website APBNews.com (www.apbnews.com).

The gathering was hosted by the Poynter Institute, a prestigious journalism school that has been described as a think tank for news professionals. I serve as a fellow at Poynter and spend a week or two every month there teaching online news, investigative reporting and writing.

At the weekend gathering, we worked on position papers about the business, ethics, content and technology issues and challenges surrounding online journalism. Those will be presented and discussed at journalism conventions and gatherings around the country in the months ahead.

I tell you all this because I am more convinced than ever after attending the Florida meeting that the Internet will soon become the most influential of the mass media.

Because it is interactive, you will soon be able to regularly and instantly access statistics and data bases directly related to your city, your neighborhood. News-on-demand links will let you dig into original reporting as deeply as you want, instead of being frustrated by one-minute-10-second television reports and space-limited newspaper accounts.

And all this content will be fresh and updated hourly, or sooner.

Change in venue

Within a decade, most of the journalists at last weekend's meeting believe, the main effort of newspapers and broadcast stations will be focused on the Net.

"What we essentially produce isn't a physical thing," said one of the reporters. "What we produce is information. And now, the Internet is the most efficient means of delivering that information."

Said another journalist who left a traditional reporting job to work at a Web startup. "I'm proud of what I do again. I really can tell all the different sides, offer all the different perspectives and voices on an issue with the Internet. This is what the public has been clamoring for ... quality, in-depth, balanced news ... and we can now do that online."

What do you think? How much do you currently use the Internet for news? What frustrates you about the Net? About traditional newspapers and broadcast stations? What do you like about old and new media? I'd really like to know. E-mail me at mike@pcmike.com and I'll share your comments with my journalistic colleagues and, if I hear from enough of you, in this column.

Meanwhile, here are some other *things you need to know* about:

Windows 2000 not for most home users

There's so much hype about Windows 2000 (set for official release later this month but already on some store shelves) that I thought I'd better warn home PC users that this product is not for most consumers. It's aimed at those business or power users who are running Windows NT. For the home user with Windows 98, upgrading to 2000 is very tricky and can result in all sorts of conflicts and compatibility problems with software and peripherals.

Ford and UAW will set PC trend

Have you seen the story about Ford Motor Co. and the UAW reaching an agreement under which each of the automaker's 350,000 workers will get an Internet-connected computer at home? Mark my words, this will spread to the other auto companies and then numerous other corporations around the nation. Ford has the Internet figured out. It's a great way to build community among those you most need community from ... your own work force. Congrats to Ford Chairman William Ford Jr., Chief Executive Officer Jac *Nasser and United Auto Work*ers union President Stephen Yokich. Great idea!

"Souping up your PC" seminar next week

If you want to learn how to get the most out of your computer, then be sure to join me and a panel of tech experts next Saturday Feb. 19, from 9:30 a.m, to noon at the MSU Management Center, just off I-75 at Square Lake Road at Crooks in Troy. We'll also talk about how to maintain the entire system, how to network different computers together, how to get maximum speed out of your Internet connection and how to solve the most common PC problems.

The seminar is free, but you must reserve a spot in advance by calling the PC Mike/WXYT 24-hour seminar hotline at (888) 455-7343.

Super Bowl ads

Everyone is still talking about the TV ads in the Super Bowl. Did you see the EDS cat roundup? The Christopher Reeve walking ad? There's a site called AdCritic (www.adcritic.com) that not only reviews the ads but critiques them and lets you see them on your computer screen. All ads, all the time. Movie trailers, too. There's also an archive of old ads.

Until next week, "73" everybody.

Mike Wendland covers the Internet for NBC-TV Newschannel stations across the country. His "PC Talk" radio show airs Saturday and Sunday afternoons on Detroit's WXYT-Radio AM1270. He is the author of a series of Internet books. You can reach him through his website at http://www.pcmike.com

MEDICAL DATEBOOK

***Items for Medical Datebook** are welcome from all hospitals, physicians, companies and residents active in the Observer-area medical community. Items should be sent to: Medical Datebook, c/o The Observer Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150, e-mail kmortson@oe.homecomm.net or faxed to (734) 591-7279.*

WED, FEB. 9

HEART HEALTH SEMINAR

In recognition of American Heart Month, Liz Bailey, registered dietitian, and Jennifer Kinch will discuss heart-healthy living at Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital. Learn how to select an exercise program to keep you motivated, identify the hidden fats in our diets and use low-fat substitutes for cooking during this interactive presentation.

TUE, FEB. 15

MEAL PLANNING W/DIABETES

Come join us for an informative evening that covers how you can improve your blood sugar control with helpful eating and exercise ideas. $5 fee. Meets from 4-5:30 p.m. at the Mission Health Medical Center in Livonia. Call (877) 345-5500 to register.

THUR, FEB. 17

PRE-MARRIAGE COUNSELING

Couples applying for a marriage license must show proof that they have received counseling regarding the transmission and prevention of sexually transmitted disease and AIDS. Class runs from 7-8 p.m. at the Providence Medical Center - Novi. Cost is $25 per couple, $15 single. To register call (877) 345-5500.

MON, FEB. 21

SPORTS NUTRITION

This class focuses on the basic of sports nutrition for high school athletes. Proteins, carbohydrates, fats and fluids will be discussed. Fee $10. Meets at 6:30 p.m. at the Providence Medical Office Center - Novi.

TUE, FEB. 22

GOLF FITNESS SEMINAR

Range of motion and proper body mechanics can affect your golf game. Learn how to physically prepare for a great golf season with Physical Therapist John Connolly and Orthopaedic Surgeon Phillip T. Schmitt, D.O. at Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital. Free of charge. Begins at 7 p.m. Call (888) DMC-2500.

WED, MARCH 22

HEALTHY CROCKPOT COOKING

Tired of cooking every night when you get home? Utilize a crockpot for quick and healthy meal preparation. Learn how to plan low-fat, healthy meals and modify recipes from Liz Bailey, registered dietitian at Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital. Recipes and samples for tasting will be provided. Call (888) DMC-2500. Cost is $5. Class runs from 6-7:30 p.m.

THUR, MARCH 23

ANGER MANAGEMENT

Anger is the most long-lasting of all moods. The negative consequences of anger are numerous and can lead to damaged friendships, reckless driving, verbal/physical fights and alcohol abuse. This presentation at Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital will be conducted by David Wartel, Ph.D., and is designed to help you identify your anger, its consequences and ways of handling it better. Begins at 7 p.m. Free of charge. Call (888) DMC-2500.

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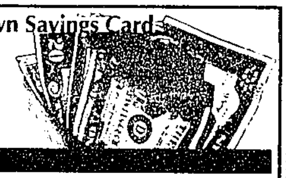

$ Automotive

11 Mile/Henley Marathon ... Berkley — Oil Change only $15.95 (with full-up)
Augers Auto Body Collision ... Clawson — Free Exterior Wax/Polish With Any Repair
Dons Done-Rite Auto Wash ... Berkley — $1 Off Our #3 "Best Wash and Dry"
Eclipse Window Tint, 9206 Telegraph ... Redford — 10% Off Purchase Over $200
Huntington Woods Mobile ... Huntington Woods — Free 20 oz. Pop with purchase of min. 8 gallons super
Jim Fresard Pontiac Buick ... Royal Oak — 10% Off Parts and Service
Stop and Go Auto Repair ... Ferndale — $80 Brakes, Front or Rear, Inclusive, plus Tax
Tom Halbeisen Goodyear ... Birmingham/Royal Oak — 10% Off All Services
Wetmores ... Ferndale — Free Oil Change With Two Tire Purchase

$ Beauty & Health Care Professionals

Affordable Optics ... Royal Oak — 15% Off Any Frames
Alisons Tanning Salon ... Clawson — 10% Off Any Reg. Priced Membership or package
Berkley Beach Tanning Salon ... Berkley — 3 month bed $80/3, month hex $100
Better Health Store ... Walled Lake — 10% Off On All Supplements
Checker Drugs 190 S. Wayne Road ... Westland — All Vitamins $1.00 Off
Dr. Daniel V. Tominello ... Royal Oak — Free Initial Consultation & Exam
Dr. Lefkowitz ... Ferndale — Free Initial Consultation
Dulac Hair Fashions ... Farmington Hills — 10% Off Reg. Price Cuts & Rusk Products
Farrell Reis ... Birmingham — $5 Off Any Hair Service
Family Dental Center 734-427-9300 ... Livonia — 10% Off First Visit & Free consultation
Great Nails ... Berkley — 10% Off Any Service
House of Optical ... Royal Oak — 15% Off Complete Pair of Eyeglasses
Medical Center Pediatrics DMC ... W Bloom./Bing Farms — Special Offer for New Patients. Call for Details
Milenco Barber & Stylist ... Berkley — $1 Off Haircuts + $5 Off Highlights & Colors
Partners Salon 476-2849 ... Farmington Hills — 10% Off Color Services, 10% Off Massage, Haircut
Posh Salon ... Southfield — 20% Off All Services
Shear Radiance Sheridan Square ... Garden City — 10% Off First Service
Sir Davids Hair Salon ... Westland — 20% Off of Hair & Tanning Products
Spunkys Womens Gym ... Clawson — 15% Off Any Membership
The Gallery of Hair ... Royal Oak — 10% Off All Services
Vanish Electrolysis ... Ferndale — 10% Off Second Treatment

$ Coffee, Bagels & Bakeries

Mary Dennings Cakes ... Westland — 10% Off Special Order Cakes
New York Bagel ... Ferndale — $1 Off Any Food Purchase of $5 or More

$ Day Care

Hands & Hearts Around the World ... Garden City — 10% Off 1st Months Tuition

$ Dry Cleaners & Laundry

Huntington Cleaners ... Huntington Woods — 10% Off Incoming Orders for New Customers
J.S. Prestige Cleaners on 5 Mile ... Livonia — 20% Off Dry Cleaning (No Other Coupons)
Mai Kai Cleaners ... All Locations — Free Seater or Pant W/$9.95 Incoming Cleaning
Park Ave $1.75 Cleaners 844-5091 ... Canton — $1.50 Per Item for Dry cleaning
Rags to Riches Cleaners ... Clawson — 15% Off Dry Cleaning Only (Min. $25 Order)
Touch of Class ... Plymouth — 15% Off All Dry Cleaned Garments
White Cleaners & Coin Laundry ... Berkley — 30% Off Incoming Dry Cleaning Orders

$ Entertainment

Ambassador Roller Rink ... Clawson — Buy One Admission - Get One Free (Sat. Only)
Detroit Zoological Society ... Royal Oak — 10% Off All Membership Packages
Electric Stick ... Westland — Pay for One Hour of Pool - Get One Hour Free
Hartfield Lanes ... Berkley — Free Shoe Rental for Cardholder

$ Florists & Gifts

Home ... Royal Oak — 10% Off Purchase (not to be combined w/other offers)
Kevins Floral Expressions ... Ferndale — 10% Off - Excluding Wire Orders
Mary Jane Flowers ... Royal Oak — $5.00 Off Any Purchase Over $10.00
Steve Codens Flowers ... Southfield — Free Delivery in Metro Detroit Area
The Green Bee ... Royal Oak — 10% Off Purchase over $10

$ Home Improvement

ABC Plumbing ... Clawson — $20 Off Service or $25 Off SNR
American Blind and Wallpaper Factory ... Plymouth — 10% Off Order $50 Min. Mention Code HE10
Bergstroms Inc Plumbing & Heating ... Livonia — $15 Off Service Calls 734-522-1350
Berkley Plumbing ... Berkley — $15 Off Plumbing Repair/Sewer Drain Service
Beyer Heating & Cooling Inc ... Ferndale — 10% Off Air Conditioning Special
Burton & Sons ... Garden City — $15.00 Off Service Call 734-427-3070
Burton Plumbing & Heating ... Wayne — 10% Off All Materials Service/Store
Casemore Electric Inc ... Royal Oak — $25.00 Off Any Electrical Work Over $200.00
Coachs Carpet Care ... Ypsilanti — 10% Reg. Scheduled Services, Carpet, UPH, Ducts
Colbys Decorating Center 968 Newburgh ... Westland — 10% Off ALL In Stock Merchandise
Horton Plumbing ... Plymouth — Free Laundry Tub & Faucet with Repipe
I Do Windows 313-927-4990 ... Redford — First Clean Free with Pre-Paid Service
KTP Designs Inc ... Berkley — One Hour Free Interior Design Consultation
New Beginnings LLC 734-513-0755 ... Livonia — 10% Off Painting Two or More Rooms
Sumner Plumbing & Sewer ... Royal Oak — $15 Off Service or SRS $20 Off
United Temperature ... Livonia — Furnace Cleaning & Inspection $57.00

$ Jewelers

Bright Jewelers 44344 Cherry Hill 734-844-2404 ... Canton — 50% Off 14K Gold Chains
Chinn Jewelry ... Royal Oak — We Will Pay Your Sales Tax Excluding Loose Diamonds
Dobie Jewelers ... Berk/Blm/Farm/Clawf/Hunt Woods/Pl Ridge/Royal Oak — 1/2 Off Ring Sizing (excluding platinum)
Miners Den ... Royal Oak — Free Watch Battery (One Per Customer)
O & D Bush Jewelers 734-455-3030 ... Plymouth — 50% Off All Silver Jewelry
Woods ... Pleasant Ridge/Royal Oak — 1/2 Off Ring Sizing (excluding Platinum)

$ Landscape & Maintenance

Bills Outdoor Care ... Canton — Commercial Snowplowing Contract 10% Off
D. A. Alexander & Co. ... Livonia — 10% Discount
Saxtons Garden Center ... Plymouth — 10% Off All Hand Garden Tools

$ Pizza

Cottage Inn Pizza ... Birmingham — 2 Large Pizzas W/One Item $12.99
Marias Deli & Pizzeria 734-981-1200 ... Canton — $5.00 OFF a $50.00 Purchase (excluding tobacco & alcohol)
Papa Romanos ... Ferndale — $1.00 Off Bambino Bread with any purchase
Pizza One ... Ferndale — 2 Small Pizzas for $8.99 + tax
Ralios Pizza ... Royal Oak — $1.50 Off Large Square Pizza

$ Restaurants

Alexander The Great ... Westland — 10% Off Entrees - Not Valid on Specials
Barbs Pasties ... Livonia — 10% Off When You Buy 4 Pasties
Beehive Family Dining ... Wayne — 20% Off Any Order
Christines Cuisine ... Ferndale — 10% Off Any Dinner Entree (Carry Out Only)
Clubhouse BBQ ... Ferndale — Free 2 Liter of Faygo with Any Purchase ($7 Min.)
Code 30 Coffee Cafe Inc. ... Redford — $1.00 Off Any Flavored Latte
Dairy Queen of Royal Oak ... Royal Oak — 10% Off Total Bill
Deli Delite ... Royal Oak — 15% Off Purchase of $10 or More
Don Pedros ... Redford — 10% Off Food Over $10 (No Other Offer)
Duggans Irish Pub ... Royal Oak — 10% Off Total Food Bill w/$10 Purchase or more
Farm-us Chicken & Ribs ... Clawson — Buy One Dinner and get $1 OFF Second Dinner
Hard Ice Cream Cafe on Farmington S. of Plymouth ... Livonia — 10% Off Any Item including Sanders Cakes
Hat Trick Pub/Deli ... Berkley — 10% Off Any Food Purchase
Max & Ermas ... Birmingham — 10% Off Purchase, excluding alcohol & gratuities
Mitch Houseys Schoolcraft/Middlebelt ... Livonia — 10% Off Your Bill - Lunch or Dinner 734-425-5520
New King Lims 248-474-2781 ... Farmington Hills — 10% Off Total Bill
O'Malley's Bar & Grill 15231 Farmington & Five ... Livonia — 15% Discount after 8 p.m. except Holidays
Paynes ... Berkley — 10% Off Total Food Bill With $10 Purchase or More
Samuel Hoffmans New York Deli ... Clawson — 10% Off Total Food Bill
Steves Deli ... Bloomfield Hills — $10.00 Off Any Catering Order
Subway ... Berkley/Ferndale — $1.00 Off Any Footlong Sub
Soupreme Deli ... Clawson — $1.00 Off Any Sandwich
Woodys Diner ... Royal Oak — 10% Off Total Food Bill With $10 Purchase or More

$ Retail

A Shady Business ... Walled Lake — 10% Off Any Lamp Purchase
Alcove Hobby Shop ... Royal Oak — 10% Off Any Purchase
Alexanders Framing ... Royal Oak — 15% Off Any Purchase
Altes Greenfield Market ... Southfield — 5% Off Any Meat or Produce Purchase
America's Vitamin & Nutrition ... Berkley — 10% Off Any Purchase Every Day
Beads S.R.O. ... Royal Oak — 10% Off Purchase of $10 or More
Border Outlet 3500 Lilley 734-397-6328 ... Canton — 10% Off In-Stock Only
Bourliers BBQ & Fireplace ... Ferndale — 10% Off Replacement Parts
Chet's Rent-All ... Berkley — 10% Off Any Rental
Champions Cellular Warehouse ... Southfield — 10% Discount
Chris Furniture Farmington/Plymouth Rd. ... Livonia — 40% Off All End Tables
Circa ... Berkley — 10% Off on All Circa Antiques & Collectibles
Contract Design Group ... Royal Oak — 10% Off New Orders/Carpeting/Linoleum
Crossing Bridges ... Berkley — 10% Off Candles, Incense & More (Books/Sales excluded)
Dailey Carpet 8 Mile W of Merriman ... Livonia — 10% Off Any Reg. Priced Merchandise (Excludes Labor)
Dimitrie Upholstering ... Royal Oak — 10% Off Complete Order
Dining Furniture Ltd ... Roseville — 10% Off Regular Prices
Doll Hospital 3947 W 12 Mile ... Berkley — 20-40% off See in-store Flyer
Dolls and Trains ... Lathrup Village — 10% on Selected Items
Express Photo 8 Mile ... Livonia — 20% Off Processing 25% Off Enlargements
Four Seasons Garden Center ... Oak Park — 10% Off Reg. Price Shrubs & Perennials (not w discount)
F & N Floor Covering 16 & Dequindre ... Troy — 15% Off All Carpet & Pad - Showroom Price!
Frentz & Sons Hardware ... Royal Oak — 10% Off Purchase
Henderson Glass ... Berkley — 10% Off Any Purchase excluding sale items
Hersheys Shoes 29522 Ford Road ... Garden City — 10% Off Regularly Priced Merchandise
Independent Carpet One ... Westland — 10% Off Labor
J & K Trophy & Engraving 248-473-7871 ... Livonia — 10% Off All Awards Signs & Gift Items
Just Waiting Maternity Shoppe ... Berkley — 10% Off Any Purchase excluding Sale Items
Kitchen & Bath Depot ... Royal Oak — Free Professional Design Time (2 hours)
Looking Glass Antiques ... Plymouth — 15% Off Any Item $25.00 or More
Marcys Groom-A-Pet ... Birmingham — 20% Off Retail Supplies (does not include grooming)
Mattress King ... Pleasant Ridge/Madison Heights/Troy — 10% Off Any Purchase
Metro Bikes Inc ... Berkley — 10% Off All Accessories (excluding sale items)
Metropolitan Uniform ... Berkley — 10% Off (Police, Fire, Army, Navy, Camping, Carhartt)
Mistys Cards & Gifts 734-421-1066 ... Garden City — 10% Off Regularly Priced Items
Nile Gallery ... Berkley — 10% Off Any Purchase
Once Upon A Child 5804 N Sheldon ... Canton — 10% Off Any Purchase 734-459-866
Pascha Books & Gifts 6 Mile ... Livonia — 10% Off Purchase of $50 or More
Paperbacks Unlimited ... Ferndale — 10% Off All Hardcover Books
Randys Ell of Troy ... Troy — 15% Off Any Reg Priced Merchandise thru 12/99
Reme Collectibles 42839 Ford 734-981-7500 ... Canton — 20% Off Storewide
Red Wing Shoes ... Garden City — $20.00 Off Any Regular Price Shoe/Boot
Robins Nest Gifts & Collectibles ... Plymouth — 10% Off Entire Store including Holiday Items (*Excluding Pokeman & Beanie Babies)
Smokys Cigarette Outlet ... Berkley — Free Lighter with Purchase of Carton of Cigarettes
Talking Book World ... Lathrup Village — Up to $10 Toward 1st Purchase or Rental (new Customers)
Tasty Health ... Berkley — 50¢ Off Fruit Smoothies & 10% Off Supplements
The Framery & Gallery ... Troy — 20% Off Art, Merchandise, Incoming Frame Orders
Therapeutic Books 965 N Mill 734-453-4660 ... Plymouth — Save 10% on all books
Thomas Brothers Carpet ... Clawson — 10% Off Carpet & Vinyl Purchase
Training Effect Fitness Store ... Birmingham — 10% Off Equipment Purchase 25% Off All Accessories
Unlimited Cellular ... Clawson — 10% Off Cell Phone Accessories
Village Peddler ... Plymouth — 10% Off Storewide

$ Services

All Service Mechanical ... Berkley — $27 Off Any Repair
Americana Estate Sales ... Berkley — Free Household Liquidation Consultation
Bill & Rod's Appliance 734-425-2584 ... Livonia — $10 Off In-Home Appliance Repairs
Buttons Rent It ... Royal Oak — $5.00 Off Total Rental Price (Mon-Fri)
Carmack Appliance ... Garden City — 10% Off In-Home Service
Citgo ... Birmingham/Ferndale — 6 Lighters for $1.00
Community Federal ... Plymouth, Canton, Northville — Free Checks with New Accounts & 1/4% off Loans
Family Heating & Cooling 734-422-8080 ... Garden City — Recommended by Joe Gagnon Appliance Dr WJR Radio
Jans Dance Connection 313-562-1395 ... Dearborn — 50% Off Registration Fee
Mail Boxes Etc 7 Mile next to Joes Produce ... Livonia — 10% Off Shipping Fed-Ex or UPS
Men on The Move ... Westland — 20% Off Boxes and Packing Supplies
Observer & Eccentric Newspapers ... Plymouth — FREE Attention Getter with Your Classified Ad ($5 Value, private party ads only) 1-800-579-SELL
Robert Coburn Century 21 Assoc ... Royal Oak — Free Market Consultation
Singer Service Center ... Clawson — 10% Off Sewing Machine Repairs
The Dance Connection 734-379-6765 ... Canton — 50% Off Registration Fee
Tuffy Auto Service Plymouth Rd W of Middlebelt ... Livonia — 10% Off Parts & 5% Off Discount Prices
Universal Electric Motor Service ... Berkley — 20% Off Pool Pumps & Motors (list price)
Woodwardside Real Estate ... Royal Oak — Free Airline Miles - Call for Details
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