Towards a Digital Cooperative: How the Associated Press Distributes and Preserves the News
Royal Mail Steam Ship “Scotia,” off Cape Race, throwing overboard the New York Associated Press parcel.
Currier and Ives, ca. 1850. Courtesy American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, MA.

The news was taken off the “Scotia,” and put on the AP’s own steamer, heading to the telegraph head in Boston.
The point was to beat competing news organizations, to get the news right off the incoming ships at Halifax and get them to Boston.
Moses Yale Beach, a native of Wallingford, Connecticut, tried his hand at several inventions without success before coming to New York in 1835. There, he joined his wife's brother, Benjamin H. Day [q.v.], the owner of the *Sun*, as manager of the mechanical department of that newspaper. Day had started the *Sun* on Sept. 3, 1833, and in January 1834 took in his principal reporter, George W. Wisner, as a partner. In 1835 Beach bought Wisner's share for $5,200, and in 1838 Day's interest for $40,000. The *Sun* was then popular, having a circulation of 30,000 copies daily, but its profits, which at one time under Day had reached $20,000 a year, were small. It appeared for a time as if Beach would record another failure. "The first six months after he became entire owner of the paper," says Dr. Davis, "it did not prove as profitable as he had expected and he was ready to sell it out; and he offered it and all the property he then possessed if anyone would take it off his hands and pay his obligations (about $20,000) to Mr. Day; but, not succeeding in effecting a sale he went to work with renewed ardor and before two years had passed the last dollar was paid off." At the age of thirty-eight Beach's unflagging industry was at last rewarded by the beginning of real success. Beach devoted himself more to the success of his newspapers than to the political quarrels which marked most journals of his day. His principal adversary was Horace Greeley, who founded the *New York Tribune* in 1841, three years after Beach became owner of the *Sun*. The newsboys of these rival journals fought in the streets, and Greeley's *Tribune* denounced Beach's *Sun* as "the slimy and venomous instrument of Locofocoism, Jesuitical and deadly in politics and grovelling in morals." But the truth was that Beach was an honorable man of business, bent on keeping his *Sun* in its enviable place as the most popular newspaper in the world. On its tenth birthday, Sept. 3, 1843, he was employing eight editors and reporters, twenty compositors,
Dispatches were carried across the Gulf of Mexico from Veracruz to the port at Mobile, Alabama. There, they were given to the pony express rider, Riddle, who carried them to Montgomery, where they joined the coaches of the Great Southern Mail for the 700 mile journey to the telegraph head just south of Richmond. From there, they were telegraphed to Washington and to New York. Beach offered an equal share in the pony venture to the New York daily papers, and four accepted.
“Distribution of The Associated Press Membership To-Day and Twenty Years Ago.”
Associated Press Corporate Archives.
The Wallingford Record-Journal, January 30, 2006. The section illustrates how an AP member can structure an AP story to suit a local audience. Moses Yale Beach was a Wallingford, Connecticut native.
Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana.
Cable dispatch sent from Buffalo, New York to Boston, Massachusetts on September 6, 1901, announcing that President McKinley had been shot. It would have been impossible to know that he had been “fatally injured,” as he lingered for eight days before dying. Associated Press Corporate Archives
AP wirecopy: Second Add, Seventh Lead Little Rock Integration, September 25, 1957. Part of several sheets of wirecopy that carry the dispatches of Special Correspondent Relman Morin, whose coverage of the integration of Central High School in Little Rock that day won him the Pulitzer Prize in 1958. AP Corporate Archives.
The newsroom on election night, 1932 at AP headquarters, 383 Madison Avenue. Of note are the numerous piles of wire copy piling up on spindles and flowing from the receiving telegraph machines. The operators in the lower left are “punching” in the outgoing stories and in the process creating perforated tape that was read as electronic signals. The receiving telegraph translated the signals into words.

AP Corporate Archives.
Copy hand-edited by a General Desk editor on November 22, 1963, prior to filing on the wire. Vast amounts of copy were saved that day, in contrast to most other days, as editors instantly understood the historical impact of the day, and the value of the copy in their hands. AP Corporate Archives.
• September 14, 7:50 p.m. Second version of the story (first was First Lead). Augstums reports from Charlotte that the Wall St. Journal is reporting that AIG plans to disclose restructuring plans by early Monday. The story is moving only on the F (financial) wire and APFN, the premier financial services wire.
• September 15, 12:35 p.m., the AP Business Desk in New York files the first lead of the day in the AIG story (now slugged BC-AIG), incorporating Augstums’ previous reporting. The story is a breaking news story (“Breaking: True”) or NewsNow, and is routed on the A or national wire, the F or financial wire, the premium APFN service, and online. News Now means it is written so that broadcasters can read it. Reports that New York Governor David Paterson will allow AIG to use $20 billion in subsidiary assets to provide cash to stay in business. Shares of AIG had fallen 51% in afternoon trading.
• September 16, 6:44 p.m.  11th Lead.  Business Desk in New York files a Source Report (“A person with knowledge of the situation says…”).  New Headline. NewsNow.  Adds the required bylines for source reports (Ieva M. Augstums in Charlotte, Stephen Bernard in New York).  There are two new headlines:  the first under 50 characters; the second under 94.  Editor notes the story “will be led” or added to as more information becomes available.  You can link to photos and video. Ticker symbols are highlighted for the use of financial websites like Yahoo Finance, which will show these stocks and link to their performance, and pull stories relating to these companies.
• September 16, 6:49 p.m.  12th Lead Writethru.  The print version of the previous.  
  Same headline, but with updates and more details.  The lead is reversed from 
  previous (“The government is increasingly likely to step in to help rescue the huge 
  insurer AIG, a person with knowledge of the situation said Tuesday.”)

September 16, 8:02 p.m.  16th Lead.  New Headline.  NewsNow.  The dateline switches to Washington because the Federal Reserve is making an announcement that the U.S. government has agreed to provide an 85 billion emergency loan to AIG.  Broadcasters interrupted their programming to read the report.
• September 16, 8:24 p.m. 18th Lead Writethru. First bylined story from Washington. Adds Jeannine Aversa (Washington) to Augstums (Charlotte) and Bernard (New York). Editor notes: ADDS more details, background, restores graphics, bylines. Aversa takes over the story from Washington.
• September 17, 1:51 a.m. This is the overnight story, recast with a softer, more analytical approach. Note the lead: “Another day, another bailout.” There was no more hard news to require a new headline. Morning papers would have taken this story.
September 17, 7:20 p.m. This is the final story of the day, by Jeanne Aversa, with a lead that sets the story on Wednesday and recasts it: “American taxpayers awoke Wednesday...”
Using named entities identified in the content and auto-categorization rules, we can apply the following metadata

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects:</th>
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<td>Business, Economy, Monetary policy, Economic policy, Central Bank,</td>
<td>Industries, Financial Services, Insurance, Property and casualty</td>
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<td>insurance providers, Non-life insurance providers, Banking,</td>
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<td>credit and investment services, Banks, Government business and</td>
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<td>Government and politics, Government policy, Economic policy, Government</td>
<td>regulations and licensing, Securities regulations, Government</td>
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<td>&gt; Exchange: XNYS</td>
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Slide provided courtesy of AP’s Information Management Team. Shows the AP’s content enrichment process using the AIG story. Subjects are applied based on categorization rules; entities are applied by matching/disambiguation rules. Additional information applied using hydration.
Screen shot showing the AIG story on the Yahoo Financial Site, at 8:55 p.m. Eastern Time on September 16, leading off with: “The government is expected to announce….” This is based on AP’s 12th Lead Writethru of 6:49 p.m. Note the ticker symbols highlighted on the left side: AIG, JPM, and GS.
Honolulu Advertiser website, showing the first Washington dateline story, which moved September 16 at 8:24 p.m. Site includes AP photo, links to related local stories, related news on the Web, and options for emailing the story.
AP Exchange Screen Shot.  AIG-Greenberg-Stock Story, September 25, 1008.  2nd Lead Writethru. An enormous change over Reporter’s Workbench.
This is the same story about Maurice Greenberg, appearing on an I-Phone, through a Web feed on the Mobile News Network.

Courtesy of Will Kugelman.
Using named entities identified in the content and auto-categorization rules, we can apply the following metadata:

**Subjects:**
- Business
- Economy
- Monetary policy
- Economic policy
- Central Bank
- Industries
- Financial Services
- Insurance
- Property and casualty insurance providers
- Non-life insurance providers
- Banking, credit and investment services
- Banks
- Government business and finance

**Government and politics**
- Government policy
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- Government regulations and licensing
- Securities regulations
- Government bodies
- Executive branch
- Cabinets

**People**
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- Christopher Dodd: Politician
- Harry Reid: Politician
- John Boehner: Politician
- Ben Bernanke: Business leader

**Company**
- AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL GROUP, INC.
- Ticker: aig
- Exchange: XNYS

**Subjects applied based on categorization rules**
**Entities applied by matching/disambiguation rules**
**Additional information applied using hydration**
Using named entities identified in the content and auto-categorization rules, we can apply the following metadata

Subjects:
- Business, Economy, Monetary policy, Economic policy, Central Bank, Industries, Financial Services, Insurance, Property and casualty insurance providers, Non-life insurance providers, Banking, credit and investment services, Banks, Government business and finance
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