

# Innovation 2.0

## Jack Fuller

You can't create a group to do it. It has to be everybody who does it. You have to figure out a way to get everybody thinking ... there's a reason why they have to innovate.

For awhile it was possible to say Microsoft is coming, they're going to eat your lunch if you don't change. The world is a little more complicated than that now, but inertia has got us all, and it's hard for people to think about change.

You have to permit people to believe that they can make decisions, be wrong and survive — that they don't have to be perfect, because innovation is an imperfect process.

People are going to put down bets and some of those bets aren't going to work. If you take the head off of somebody when they do that ... then no one will ever try [to innovate] again.

## Monica Lozano

We have been forced to be innovative. When you are a newspaper that has been in a community for 75 years, people tend to think of you as what they thought they knew about you. How do you connect with the younger members of the family and keep them interested?

Last year we introduced five new sections. One of them did not survive, but four did. ... (For innovation,) have a strong newsroom that knows its community and knows how things are evolving before they hit the radar screens of other organizations.

## Burl Osborne

Innovation seems like a grand word for something that happens an inch at a time. Most of the time it is incremental. Sometimes that isn't enough, however. We thought we were covering religion pretty well until we matched up what we were actually doing with the enormous breadth of interest in religion.

The Freedom Forum was intimately involved in that process. Seventy people from every religious group we could identify came in. They talked with us about what the issues were and how perceptions were shaped and what their issues were and where

the pitfalls were and everything that we could think of that we might do wrong. We took the unusual step of showing them prototypes along the way, and they helped to critique them. We still consult them today.

Innovation that lasts has to be consistent. Whatever you do, be prepared to do it forever — or at least for a long time. ... If it is done temporarily, the readers will figure it out in a flash, and they will be more displeased than they were in the first place.

### Arthur Sulzberger Jr.

We will fail if we don't always find that part of our journalism that we must reinvigorate or reinvent. Are we doing the right kind of investigative reporting? Are we putting enough resources [into] it? Are we ignoring parts of our city in our coverage?

Do we need to reinvest in the quality of our local journalism? Where's our next Science Times or Circuits section? Have we kept up with the redefinition of Home and what it means to be living in America today? ... The day we think we're doing it right is the day we start to decline.

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*The New York Times* has been [in continuous change] for generations, pretty well from 1896 when my great-grandfather bought it. Adolph Ochs immediately created a magazine, a book review section and a business section, all within a month. And this for a paper that was losing money, hemorrhaging at that time. But it was his adding to it that helped to bring it back up.

### Dick Wald

In my experience most innovations have been made by people who are not leaders. That is, by institutions that are not leading. It is a given in life that book sections are a wonderful thing. They were invented by a newspaper that was just looking for more advertising and they invented a book section. Other people copied it.

Innovations tend to be those things that you need to get ahead of the other person. They tend to be the things that are remembered by everybody.



We started “Nightline” because everybody was talking about this crisis in Iran and there was always something to talk about. Some of the things Roone (Arledge) did were simply forced by contracts, geography and everything else, and he was figuring ways around them. But some of the things he did were just common sense when you look back on it. But nobody had done it.

A large part, though, was in personal power. There are people, and I have been

cursed to work with several of them, who convince [you] that they know what they're doing. They just know. And there are a couple of people I've met who convince you that they know what they're doing and they're terrible. But luckily Roone wasn't one of those. If you talked to him in the period when he was running ABC News, he knew what he was going to do and how it would work and how it would turn out.

I don't know whether it's conviction or chemistry or genes, or whatever the hell it is. But it is a quality of personality as much as the ideas that come with it. It doesn't mean much if it's just the quality of personality. But if there is a mind that goes with it, it creates some interesting things.

### **Mark Whitaker**

At *Newsweek*, we call it throwing spaghetti against the wall. You throw the spaghetti against the wall and you see whether it sticks.

You get reader feedback.

### **Neal Shapiro**

In the morning after working out, or at night just watching anything on television, not even news, I often had a lot of brainstorms. [Now] we have to multi-task more and more. That is what living in this world with beepers and cell phones and everything means. So I get on the bike for 30 minutes, but I am reading the paper and watching the "Today" show while I do that.

Then there are still a few moments when there is nothing else to read and nothing else to do but think. And, aha, I have got an idea.

### **William Hearst III**

I think one of the great failings of newspapers today is that there is a homogenized definition of what a newspaper is. ...

There is this sort of automatic assignment of importance to international news, local news, education, sports, business. I tried to think instead — well, how does *Le Monde* solve that problem? How does the underground press solve that problem? And the box just got a lot bigger, [the box] from where you could draw ideas.