

UT Austin | Portugal

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATORY FOR EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES, CoLAB



STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

Paulo Nuno Vicente

International News Reporting in a Global Network perspective (Online Journalism)

Paulo Nuno Vicente, currently in Austin (Texas), is a PhD student in the scope of Advanced Digital Media Program. As a journalist and documentarian, he has produced several works in Guinea-Bissau, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, Ceuta and Melilla, Brazil, Lebanon, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Israel and West Bank, Chad and Central African Republic.

Since international news is frequently at the very basis of policy decisions and the public's perception of geographically faraway events, it has been considered a part of continuing out-of-school lifelong education (Mody, 2010).

How many world locations would not exist in our minds – and how many remain in shadow – due to the work of international journalism?

Admitting that “new digital media connect the world and lower the distinctions between professional and citizen; both can express themselves and be potentially received most anywhere in the world” (Reese, 2010, p. 350), what transformations can we identify in international news reporting professionalism, values, roles and sources if considering, as has been previously proposed, that “anyone sending information from one country to another is a de facto



Paulo Nuno Vicente, Beirut, Lebanon, 2006

foreign correspondent” (Utey, 1997, p. 9)?

What implications for journalism roles are posed by the consideration of a foreign correspondence *de jure* and a foreign correspondence *de facto*? This is the underlying framing question for this PhD research.

Are we facing the arrival of a new type of foreign correspondent or a remediation of the old type supported by different means of communication? And how are *new media* being adopted by professionals and by organized *pro-ams*, “innovative, committed and networked amateurs working to professional standards” (Leadbeater & Miller, 2004, p. 9)?

The research will be based in an online survey and interviews directed to professional reporters and *pro-ams* working in Africa for two international news agencies, one professional

news organization based exclusively on the web and one also exclusively online citizen media project. In that sense, this study addresses a specific lacuna in global communication studies, by producing knowledge in a Global South context.

Looking at how the different actors perceive their news-gathering practices in relation to *professionalism* in journalism and its occupational jurisdiction (Abbott, 1988), the study will be able to evaluate hypothetical similarities and differences regarding journalism role in society among the selected news actors.

The research will also be critically addressing the idea of international news reporters as an *elite* through a demographic characterization of the actual practitioners, since previous systematic works have been mainly depicting U.S. and Western European news professionals and most

of them have been produced decades ago (Hess, 1996; Maxwell, 1956).

My stays in Austin has been devoted to fundamental background research work as well as to some exploratory interviews which have been made in order to identify current debates and concerns among professional reporters, editors and scholars, and to fill some knowledge gaps in the existing literature. The ongoing work can be followed at <http://digital-storytelling.net>.

R&D PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

Project: Breadcrumbs

Principal Investigator: Álvaro Pedro de Barros Borges Reis Figueira



News media are at a point of historic transition. The conjuncture of digital and social media is merging the roles of readers and providers. Readers are increasingly participating in the news media cycle, where

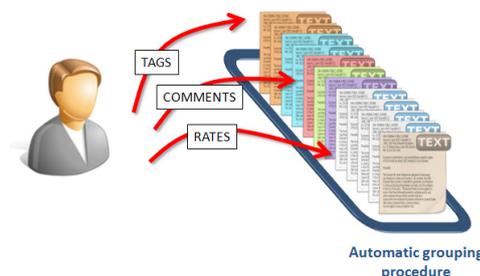
news is written, published, commented, associated with other news, improved, and published again. The future of news depends on harnessing the participation of readers in the global process of production and consumption of news.

We believe that news media increasingly depends on the participation of readers. While currently it is possible to infer valuable information by analyzing the readers' comments, tags, ratings, and how often they click on the link to a given story, news providers are looking for better methods to harness the readers' participation. It is critical to devise interaction methods that allow journalists to learn more about the interests of their readers, the tags they put into the news, and even the implicit relationships that the readers perceive between different articles, events, and stories. This not only allows journalists to infer the readers' interests, but also allows them to identify valuable reader/contributors, and follow new leads for further writing.

The goal of the "Breadcrumbs" project (<http://breadcrumbs.up.pt>) is to capitalize on the participation of the general public in the production of news by creating bridges between online news and the "Social Web". The project builds on the use of social web tools, gathering the opinions of readers, and creating a semantically organized model of the readers' opinions which is then shared among them.



The current project developments include a news collecting tool and a model for semantically organizing news and tags. The next steps will involve the creation of a user



interface and a preliminary test of use in real context. In the next months we will start developing the model that interconnects readers' opinions.

Digital Media Program Members Participate in SXSW 2011

Members of the UT Austin-Portugal Digital Media program faculty from U. Porto and UT Austin and one doctoral student presented to audiences at Austin's internationally renowned SXSW Interactive festival, which took place from March 11-15. The event attracted approximately 19,000 registered participants this year, a new record.

Artur Pimenta Alves, co-director of the UTAustin-Portugal program in Digital Media, spoke at two SXSW Technology Summit sessions on March 17th: First, he presented in the Portugal session, which was dedicated to providing an overview of past, present and prospective technological developments in Portugal. Also participating were Secretary of State for Science, Technology, and Higher Education Manuel Heitor; Celso Martinho, technological director of Sapo, and Heitor Alvelos, as Associate Director of ID+, Institute of Research in Design, Media and Culture. Heitor, a professor at the University of Porto and member

of the UTAustin-Portugal coordination team for Digital Media, chaired the session. Artur then spoke at the session "International Examples of Regional Creative Indus-



SXSW: Creative Industries Session

tries Development”, where panelists from Norway (David Holme/ balticuniverse), Austin TX (Jim Butler and David Gibson/ UTAustin) and Australia (Defrim Isai) exchanged references, strategies and outlooks.

All sessions were attended by a highly engaged audience actively contributing to the debate and further extending the panelists' ideas. Various UTAustin-Portugal initiatives were part of the examples displayed and discussed: the futureplaces digital media festival and workshops, research projects, PhD programs and summer schools.

Additionally, Heitor led the March 14th panel “Neither Moguls Nor Pirates: Grey Area Music Distribution”, which included talks by Patricia Aufderheide, director of the Center for Social Media (Washington D.C.); Alex Seago, chair of Humanities at Richmond University (London, U.K.); Sam Howard-Spink, assistant professor at NYU Steinhardt's Department of Music and Performing Arts, and Jeff Ferrell, professor of cultural criminology at Kent University (U.K.). The panel dedicated itself to unraveling various aspects of emerging models for music distribution, as well as providing a deeper understanding of the complexity and ambiguity of practices that are often bundled within the term “piracy”.

The session was controversial, and unanimously considered highly informative. Twitter feedback is available at [#musicdistribution](#).



SXSW: Alvelos Session

Big Brother Goes Green: Surveillance for Sustainable Forests

The panel “Big Brother Goes Green: Surveillance for Sustainable Forests” (http://schedule.sxsw.com/events/event_IAP6736) was presented by Mónica Mendes and Nuno Correia on Saturday, March 12, 5pm, at the Austin Convention Center.

After an introduction on surveillance and the use of real-time video in artistic contexts, Mónica and Nuno focused on the issues raised from the questions proposed, presenting the premises and progress of their research project developed in the scope of the UT Austin | Portugal Program, RTiVISS (Real-Time Video Interactive Systems for Sustainability).

The presentation showcased the design and technology of the specific RTiVISS interactive installations “Play with

Fire”, “B-wind!”, and “Hug@ree”, combining physical and virtual worlds. These examples were followed by their proposals on usability and evaluation. Collaboratively developed by artists, activists and technologists, these new systems strengthen environmental awareness through “the emotion of real-time” – a case study of what happens when tinkerers, open-source coders, and new media artists work together for a better world.

The presentation raised interesting questions, from the development of the RTiVISS software and hardware kit in the context of the work developed with the hackerspace members, to the paradoxical proposal of playing with fire for environmental purposes.

The SXSW audience responded enthusiastically, and future collaboration with an Austin environmental institution may follow. Additionally, the presenters received suggestions to submit the current research for further academic and technological events.

Research interactions of the project presented are continuously posted on www.rtiviss.com and the twitter feedback is available at [#BBgoesGreen](#).



Nuno Correia and Mónica Mendes

Why the FCC Can't Please Anyone: Net Neutrality Blues

The panel “Why the FCC Can't Please Anyone: Net Neutrality Blues” (http://schedule.sxsw.com/events/event_IAP00329) was presented by Sharon Strover and Alex Curtis on Monday, March 14 at the Austin Convention Center.

UTAustin-Portugal Digital Media program co-director Sharon Strover presented on the topic of net neutrality, a subject given wide attention at the SXSW conference. She was joined by Alex Curtis from the non-profit, advocacy organization Public Knowledge.

■ Gary Chapman International School on Digital Transformation Planned for July

Planning for the Gary Chapman International School on Digital Transformation is in progress. The six-day intensive residential program, which is now in its third year, will be held in Porto, where it originated in 2009 as a joint effort between the University of Porto and UT Austin. It has been re-named for the founder, an internationally renowned expert on Internet policy and member of the UT faculty who passed away last December. His life's work continues to inspire the School. This year's program already has several featured spea-

kers confirmed including returning faculty members Leslie Regan Shade of Concordia University in Canada, Sunil Abraham of the Centre for Internet and Society in Bangalore, India, and Fiorella de Cindio of the University of Milan. A call for participant applications will be released in late March and will appear on the website at www.digitaltransformationschool.org. The School is scheduled to take place from July 17 to July 22.

■ Austin Visitors Successfully Conclude Internships

Ana Barreto and Hugo Castanho of the New University of Lisbon recently concluded their semester-long visits to Austin. As a research intern, Barreto worked with UT faculty studying advertising and social network sites. Castanho temporarily joined the team at a rising data indexing startup company, Infochimps. The two visitors' impressions are below:



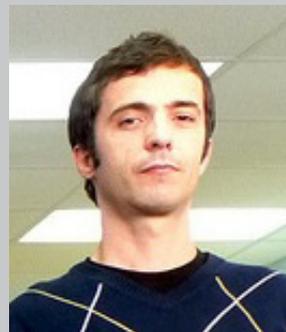
Ana Barreto

Having been a visiting researcher at the University of Texas at Austin, I have had both useful and remarkable experiences that will have an undoubtedly positive effect on my future work.

The collaboration between myself and UT Austin | Portugal has allowed me to learn more about the state of art in my research area and also to exchange and get in touch with other professionals, both in and out of classes. With this opportunity, I also had the chance to learn more about research methodology practices from UT professors.

In addition to this study of method, I had the opportunity to organize a study that used eye-tracking technology in the UT Psychology Department to test the advertising "banner blindness" theory. The main purpose of the study was to measure the advertising effectiveness of social network sites, specifically Facebook. This research sought to understand if users' eyes were drawn to the ads on a Facebook page and how users interact with brands on the site, both in terms of what they see and what particularly

gets their attention. The key measurements in this study were: time to first fixation, areas of interest (AOI) and duration of fixation. The possible benefits associated with this research are manifest, from obtaining useful information about how users react to the ads on the Facebook page to contributing to research on the use of eye-tracking technology for advertising and communication purposes.



Hugo Castanho

Working at the startup Infochimps was a valuable learning experience for me. While I came to Infochimps with some coding and interface design experience, the startup experience really helped refine my skillset and broaden my knowledge of both my professional skills and also my workplace understanding.

During my internship, I became involved in some of their central projects and the result was fantastic for both the organization and me. People there were always ready to help me in everything; they transitioned me into their strict routines without a hassle, I gained more coding skills, and most of all, I made some great overseas friends. I highly recommend Infochimps for future internships not only because Infochimp's data usage is years ahead of what we do in Europe, but also because they are great people to work with.

I have very much enjoyed this internship and sincerely hope to get back to UT through the Digital Media PhD program next year.

■ UTEN CORNER

"Initiation Brainstorms with Students" kick off

Braga, Vila-Real, Coimbra and Lisbon were the first four cities to welcome the "Initiation Brainstorms with Students" experience, one of the new activities introduced by UTEN Portugal in their 2011 plan. The "Initiation Brainstorms with Students" experience, organised by UTEN and the Student Unions from the Universities of Minho, Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro, Coimbra and the Higher Education Technical Institute (Instituto Superior Técnico), took place between March 21 and 25 in cooperation with the University of Texas in Austin and the University of Carnegie Mellon.

This new activity has been incorporated into the UTEN programme for 2011 and aims to make both graduate and undergraduate students more aware of technology-based entrepreneurship and the development of new ventures. The ultimate goal is to promote knowledge building of entrepreneurship in academia in the Student Unions of Portuguese universities.

Two further "Initiation Brainstorms with Students" sessions will be organised before the end of the year, the first on the 7th June in Porto and the second on 8th June in Lisbon.

These "Initiation Brainstorms with Students" are organised in collaboration with the Portuguese Institute of Social Entrepreneurship (IES) and INSEAD.



Dave MaWhinney, Carnegie Mellon University; José Mendes, President of TecMinho; Tara Branstad, Carnegie Mellon University

■ UTEN SPOTLIGHT

Pilot Internship at the University of Minho to Fuel Technology Licensing Efforts

The University Technology Enterprise Network (UTEN) is sponsoring a unique collaboration opportunity between the technology commercialization offices of the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Minho in Portugal.

Rosemary French, a University of Texas at Austin alum and member of the university's licensing team at the Office of Technology Commercialization, has recently commenced a UTEN-funded internship at TecMinho, the technology transfer office for the University of Minho in Guimarães, Portugal. During her internship, Rosemary will utilize her experience in licensing university-based technologies to assist TecMinho with their international marketing efforts. This project will continue to build the relationship between these two universities and presents several attractive and potentially momentous collaboration opportunities such as the possibility of joint licensing and start-up initiatives.

Due to the fact that most university-based technologies are at a nascent level of development, the ability to license these technologies to companies, and eventually have a product on international markets, is an immense

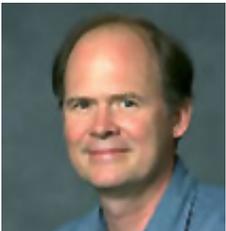
challenge. During her internship, Rosemary will examine the possibility of pairing intellectual property from the University of Minho and the University of Texas at Austin in order to create more robust technology bundles that will have a greater appeal to potential investors. The possibility of inventor collaboration and the creation of joint start-up companies is an exciting prospect of this collaboration effort as well. Rosemary will additionally serve as a bridge to United States companies that have potential interest in the technologies from the University of Minho. To maximize her contribution to UTEN, Rosemary will network with other Portuguese technology transfer offices within the UTEN network to initiate future collaboration opportunities.



TecMinho team: Pedro Silva, Rosemary French, Marco Sousa, Sílvia Teixeira, Mariana Peixoto, Clara Silva, Teresa Martin

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■ Russell Pinkston in Portugal



Russell Pinkston, one of UT Austin's senior faculty members at the Butler School of Music, visited Porto and Coimbra from February 11 to 14. Russell is a Professor of Composition and Director of Electronic Music Studios at UT Austin, and works frequently with Bruce Pennycook, who is currently teaching at the Faculty of Engineering at U. Porto.

During his visit, Russell gave a lecture on two of his interactive works to a group of students at U. Porto and met in Coimbra with members of a FEUP research team lead by Carlos Guedes, a principal investigator collaborating with Bruce on one of UT Austin-Portugal program's sponsored research projects, Kinetic Controller-driven

Music Systems. During the meetings, Russell, Bruce, and Hugh Lobel of the UT Composition Department demonstrated music software being developed at UT, and the UT faculty in turn viewed the work of Carlos's research team at U. Porto. Referring to the presentations, Russell said, "We were very impressed with the progress that Carlos and his team have made on their rhythm project and, in turn, they seemed genuinely interested and pleased with our own results in the area of melodic phrase segment analysis and music generation." Additionally, Tomás Henriques of the New University of Lisbon demonstrated several innovative devices developed as gestural controllers for real-time music synthesis systems. The researchers concluded their meetings with a session devoted to planning future work and an anticipated publication schedule.

■ Project "Kinetic Controller Driven Adaptive and Dynamic Music Composition Systems" featured on the new science program "Inovadores" from TVI 24

In the beginning of 2011 the journalistic team from the new science program "Inovadores" from TVI 24 channel went to speak with Carlos Guedes, who is a principal investigator of the UT Austin Portugal R&D project "Kinetic Controller Driven Adaptive and Dynamic Music Composition Systems".

The television report, approximately three minutes long, was filmed in Casa da Música (<http://www.casadamusica.com/>) and included the participation of the investigator Carlos Guedes as well as that of Filipe Lopes, Casa da Música's representative.

The KINETIC project is part of "Digitópia", one of the several initiatives of the educational program from this cultural space in Porto. Digitópia is a free lab for music development available to all Casa da Música visitors.

The full program with the KINETIC report is available on the link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_IPV-ew5JK0.



Applications for ZON Digital Animation Advanced Lab @ UT Austin now open

Applications until 15th April: zonlab@zon.pt.
More information at: www.zon.pt/premio.

The lab will occur in June-July (eight weeks) in Austin. Directed toward people with some animation skills, the lab will be an intensive education and training session and will include methods of rotoscoping and 2- and 3D animation techniques.

**ZON Digital Animation
Advanced Lab @ UT Austin**

Recebe Formação Avançada em **Animação Digital**
na Universidade de Austin, Texas
Candidaturas até **15 de Abril** através do e-mail: zonlab@zon.pt
Mais informação em: www.zon.pt/premio

Um programa:
ZON

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