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Connecting September 15, 2021

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Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning on this Sept. 15, 2021,

The importance of live video in AP's future was emphasized by its incoming president and CEO, **Daisy Veerasingham**.

Today's Connecting leads with an interview with Veerasingham, who takes leadership of the AP on Jan. 1, 2022, in TVNewsCheck, which covers the business of television broadcast.

Asked for her vision and most critical priorities, she responded – maintain AP's non-partisan, fact-based journalistic principles, provide the most comprehensive global news report in the world and ensure a diverse range of business models to help support the AP.

Asked about the selection of Washington bureau chief **Julie Pace** as the AP's new executive editor, Veerasingham said,

“Julie has a big background in video and live — and the importance of live cannot be underestimated in terms of our video coverage. We have done a lot to invest in maintaining five simultaneous live channels that allow us to cover the news cycle wherever it happens and however long it lasts. In many respects, Julie represents a lot of what the AP is dealing with today in terms of what customers need and want, but also how we see the market evolving over time.”

Here's to a great day ahead – be safe, stay healthy!

Paul

Live Video Is Top Priority For AP’s New Chief



By Michael Depp
TVNewsCheck Editor

Live video has risen to the top of the Associated Press’ inverted pyramid.

Daisy Veerasingham, who will take the reins as the AP’s new president and CEO from retiring chief Gary Pruitt next year, says live video is a “core foundation” for the organization, and that equipping its journalists to shoot and edit from the field is among her top objectives.

Veerasingham, AP’s current EVP and COO, will inherit a raft of challenges in her new post. The organization saw its revenue fall to \$467 million last year, a drop of more than 25% in the last decade. Diversifying revenue streams will be crucial to AP’s survival, and it’s casting its eye beyond the media world to shore up its finances.

The news co-op's membership has also dramatically shifted, with broadcasters now constituting half of its members, pushing AP's video output to the fore (the organization currently produces about 200 videos daily).

In an interview with TVNewsCheck Editor Michael Depp, Veerasingham discusses video's growing primacy and expanding efforts to diversify AP's revenues. She addresses the ongoing threat of journalist safety, and how AP is working to protect its reporters online as well as in the field.

She also speaks to the organization's staffing levels, including its vital statehouse reporting in the U.S., and she considers the prospect of a direct-to-consumer streaming service for AP's content.

An edited transcript.

You are at the helm of a news organization that dates back to 1846. What is your vision for what it will look like under your tenure, and what are your most critical priorities?

I would summarize it in three ways. In some aspects, it is about going back to the roots of [what] the AP is and what we stand for. One of my first priorities is to ensure that we maintain our non-partisan, fact-based journalistic principles. That is actually even more important today than it probably was at our founding 175 years ago.

The second priority is to continue to provide the most comprehensive global news report in the world. Every day we are very conscious of the fact that over half the world's population comes into contact with AP's journalism, and that is a really important role that we play in the whole news ecosystem.

Finally, from a business perspective, we have to continue to ensure that we have a diverse range of business models to help support us. We are not-for-profit. We are independent, and we need to maintain strength financially in order to ensure that we remain strong journalistically.

The AP is a co-op whose members are newspapers and broadcasters, although the former have been mightily diminished over the last decade or more. At this point, how healthy is your organization financially?

As news media come under pressure, so, too, has the AP, and we have had to diversify our revenue streams and find new ways of making money through providing services, know-how [and] infrastructure, not just [to] media organizations, but also to new markets like financial and risk markets. We are actually in a stronger position in spite of some of the pressure that we felt in the core media market because of the diversification we have managed to achieve. The AP is strong financially; that is not to say it doesn't still have challenges moving forward.

Is the balance of membership shifting now as newspapers suffer? Are broadcasters becoming more significant?

Yes, and that has been going on for quite a while. Today, 50% of AP's total revenue globally comes from the broadcast sector and the newspaper sector globally would

represent just under 20%.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Eva Parziale.

Connecting mailbox

What were the conditions for interview that AP turned down?

Dennis Whitehead (Email) - Monday's AP story on the upcoming January 18 rally at the U.S. Capitol includes a buried note of significance...

"Braynard declined to respond to additional questions by email, and The Associated Press declined to accept the conditions he made for an interview."

While the reporting team inserted text attributed to a July press release from rally organizer Matt Braynard, why not include the text of his conditions for an interview? Was he seeking money? Did he want to control the questions? What were these conditions?

Isn't this part of the story?

Who is this guy? The story describes him as "a former Trump campaign strategist," to whit a meme specialist who brought Pepe the Frog to the Trump campaign, his service highlighted by being "laid off" from the campaign in March 2016. Otherwise, the guy is a vapor who's latched onto the election fraud fundraising bandwagon with roots founded in the white supremacist movement.

The world is filled with these social media manipulators who have little-to-no actual real-world experience or resumé. Rather, they are presented in the same tones as actual professionals on whatever the topic may be and elevated to legitimacy - "as seen in The Associated Press."

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A reminder of an APME meeting 17 years ago



Mark Mittelstadt ([Email](#)) — There are “tickler files” in AP offices to remind of upcoming events. And then there’s Facebook, which reminds of upcoming, current or past birthdays of friends.

Facebook took it to a different level this week. On Monday I was reminded of the birthday for a friend, Rosemary Goudreau O’Hara. Not only did I get a prod, Mark Zuckerberg’s minions thought this 17-year-old photo would be good to share with her to celebrate.

Rosemary, then editorial page editor of the Tampa Tribune, was a member of the Associated Press Managing Editors board of directors when it held its final meeting at AP’s Rockefeller Center headquarters in June 2004. AP was in the process of moving from its namesake building to more modern space at 450 33rd Street, near Madison Square Garden. APME leadership wanted a group photo in front of iconic 50 Rock before dispersing to the airports or trains.

Much has changed in the 17 years since. Most of the pictured editors and executives have retired while others have left journalism for other occupations. Rosemary retired earlier this year after 44 years in the business. AP itself also moved to yet another address in southern Manhattan. (AP Photo/Richard Drew)

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Connecting sky shot – Lake Champlain



Adriana Wiersma ([Email](#)) – Summer sunset over Lake Champlain, VT.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



Emily Bradbury - ebradbury@kspress.com

Connie Farrow - connie@conniefarrow.com

Andy Katell - andrew.katell@verizon.net

Stories of interest

The National Trust for Local News is trying to build a \$300 million fund to help save local news (Poynter)

By: Rick Edmonds

In the crowded field of nonprofits supporting local news ventures, Elizabeth Hansen Shapiro's National Trust for Local News stands out as something distinct.

Rather than grants, the trust dispenses venture capital. Advice and some control come with the help. But the point is for recipients to gather other investors and develop models for serving small-town news deserts that are losing all local coverage.

I refer to the project as Hansen Shapiro's because she developed the idea, first as a Ph.D. thesis, then as a research fellow at Harvard's Shorenstein Center, and now as a research fellow at Columbia's Tow Center for Digital Journalism.

All of which suggests an academic pedigree, but the mission is not ivory tower but practical, Hansen Shapiro told me — "to create a nonprofit working with communities to save local news."

In May, the Trust announced its first project — a partnership with The Colorado Sun to buy and run an imperiled group of 24 small-town weeklies and websites near Denver, owned by Colorado Community Media. More ventures will follow through 2022, Hansen Shapiro said, in an extended beta test of what works and what doesn't before the Trust starts to scale.

Read more [here](#).

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Ten Black Newspapers Unite to Create Platform that Amplifies the Black Experience (Tennessee Tribune)

By Evelyn Mateos

Ten Black newspapers have joined forces to create Word In Black, a platform to "amplify the Black experience by reporting, collecting and sharing stories about real people in communities across our country," according to its website.

Word In Black consists of a newsletter and website (wordinblack.com) that publishes content from the 10 participating newspapers, which include: New York Amsterdam News, The Atlanta Voice, Houston Defender Network, The Washington Informer, The Dallas Weekly, The Afro, Michigan Chronicle, The Seattle Medium, The Sacramento Observer and St. Louis American. It also publishes original content.

The initiative is part of the Fund for Black Journalism, founded last year by the Local Media Association (LMA) and the same 10 newspapers to support coverage and create solutions around issues that affect Black communities.

Read more [here](#).

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SLAPP Fight: How Journalists Are Pushing Back on Nuisance Lawsuits (Global Investigative Journalism Network)

By Jared Schroeder

Nestor Nga Etoga has made nearly 100 court appearances since 2016, leaving him little time to pursue investigative journalism projects.

The Cameroon-based journalist reported on potential labor and human rights violations by an international timber company. The company responded with defamation and false news lawsuits that have dominated Etoga's life for the past five years.

"These trials have generated by their nature an acute psychological suffering characterized by a permanent anguish that inhabits me as well as the worries of my relatives, my wife, and my six children," Etoga said in an email. "There is the closure of my weekly investigative magazine *Le Renard* and the technical leave of all the staff, the lack of time to deploy in the field for new investigations, the loss of professional earnings, and the rupture of my contracts."

Read more [here](#).



Celebrating AP's 175th

AP store for 175th, vintage merchandise



The AP has created a store with 175th anniversary merchandise available for purchase, as well as items branded with some of AP's most historic logos.

Click [here](#).

AP Through Time: A Photographic History



AP Through Time: A Photographic History" - created by Director of Corporate Archives, Valerie Komor, is a keepsake commemorating AP's 175th year. Small in size (6 ¾ x 6 ¾ in.), it is organized chronologically in eight segments that trace the broad outlines of AP's development from 1846 to the present: Beginnings, Evolution, New Century, Modernity, Expansion, One World, Speed, and Transformation. Click [here](#) to view and make an order.

AP at 175 video

This video celebrates the unique role AP has played since 1846.

Oops!

The embed code for this video is not valid.



Today in History - Sept. 15, 2021



By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, Sept. 15, the 258th day of 2021. There are 107 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 15, 2001, President George W. Bush ordered U.S. troops to get ready for war and braced Americans for a long, difficult assault against terrorists to avenge the Sept. 11 attack. Beleaguered Afghans streamed out of Kabul, fearing a U.S. military strike against Taliban rulers harboring Osama bin Laden.

On this date:

In 1776, British forces occupied New York City during the American Revolution.

In 1789, the U.S. Department of Foreign Affairs was renamed the Department of State.

In 1857, William Howard Taft — who served as President of the United States and as U.S. chief justice — was born in Cincinnati, Ohio.

In 1890, English mystery writer Agatha Christie was born in Torquay.

In 1935, the Nuremberg Laws deprived German Jews of their citizenship.

In 1959, Nikita Khrushchev became the first Soviet head of state to visit the United States as he arrived at Andrews Air Force Base outside Washington.

In 1963, four Black girls were killed when a bomb went off during Sunday services at the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. (Three Ku Klux Klansmen were eventually convicted for their roles in the blast.)

In 1972, a federal grand jury in Washington indicted seven men in connection with the Watergate break-in.

In 1981, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted unanimously to approve the Supreme Court nomination of Sandra Day O'Connor.

In 1985, Nike began selling its "Air Jordan 1" sneaker.

In 2008, on Wall Street, the Dow Jones industrial average fell 504.48, or 4.42 percent, to 10,917.51 while oil closed below \$100 a barrel for the first time in six months amid upheaval in the financial industry as Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc. filed for bankruptcy protection and Merrill Lynch & Co. was sold to Bank of America.

In 2015, Hungary sealed off its border with Serbia with massive coils of barbed wire and began detaining migrants trying to use the country as a gateway to Western Europe. Harsh new measures left thousands of frustrated asylum-seekers piled up on the Serbian side of the border.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama bestowed the Medal of Honor on Sgt. Dakota Meyer, a young and humble Marine who had defied orders and repeatedly barreled straight into a ferocious "killing zone" in Afghanistan to save 36 lives at extraordinary risk to himself.

Five years ago: A report issued by the Republican-led House intelligence committee condemned Edward Snowden, saying the National Security Agency leaker was not a whistleblower and that the vast majority of the documents he stole were defense secrets that had nothing to do with privacy; Snowden's attorney blasted the report, saying it was an attempt to discredit a "genuine American hero."

One year ago: Months after the police killing of Breonna Taylor thrust her name to the forefront of a national reckoning on race, the city of Louisville agreed to pay the Black woman's family \$12 million and reform police practices as part of a settlement. Israel signed diplomatic pacts with two Gulf Arab states – the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain – at a White House ceremony that President Donald Trump said would mark the "dawn of a new Middle East." In the Gaza Strip, Palestinian militants fired two rockets into Israel, apparently meant to coincide with the White House ceremony.

Today's Birthdays: Baseball Hall of Famer Gaylord Perry is 83. Actor Carmen Maura is 76. Writer-director Ron Shelton is 76. Actor Tommy Lee Jones is 75. Movie director Oliver Stone is 75. Rock musician Kelly Keagy (KAY'-gee) (Night Ranger) is 69. Actor Barry Shabaka Henley is 67. Director Pawel Pawlikowski is 64. Rock musician Mitch

Dorge (Crash Test Dummies) is 61. Football Hall of Famer Dan Marino is 60. Actor Danny Nucci is 53. Rap DJ Kay Gee is 52. Actor Josh Charles is 50. Actor Tom Hardy is 44. Actor Marisa Ramirez is 44. Pop-rock musician Zach Filkins (OneRepublic) is 43. Actor Dave Annable is 42. Actor Amy Davidson is 42. Britain's Prince Harry is 37. TV personality Heidi Montag is 35. Actor Kate Mansi is 34.

Got a story or photos to share?

Got a story to share? A favorite memory of your AP days? Don't keep them to yourself. Share with your colleagues by sending to Ye Olde Connecting Editor. And don't forget to include photos!

Here are some suggestions:

- **Second chapters** - You finished a great career. Now tell us about your second (and third and fourth?) chapters of life.
- **Spousal support** - How your spouse helped in supporting your work during your AP career.
- **My most unusual story** - tell us about an unusual, off the wall story that you covered.
- **"A silly mistake that you make"**- a chance to 'fess up with a memorable mistake in your journalistic career.
- **Multigenerational AP families** - profiles of families whose service spanned two or more generations.
- **Volunteering** - benefit your colleagues by sharing volunteer stories - with ideas on such work they can do themselves.
- **First job** - How did you get your first job in journalism?
- **Connecting "selfies"** - a word and photo self-profile of you and your career, and what you are doing today. Both for new members and those who have been with us a while.
- **Most unusual place** a story assignment took you.



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