



A Page out of History:

Use of archives to increase news website traffic

Leigh Montgomery, Librarian

The Christian Science Monitor

Special Libraries Association Annual Conference

Seattle, Washington

June 18, 2008

The Monitor at 100

Founded in 1908, *The Christian Science Monitor* has a commitment to international news for a worldwide audience.

**9 domestic bureaus, 9 international;*

**1.5 million unique visitors, 5 million page views each month;*

**56,000 paid print circulation;*

The Monitor's Library

The *Monitor* has had a library since 1908.

Archived interview with Leon Stone, first librarian:

"I started the first reference file in the history of the MONITOR. This was the nucleus of the present MONITOR Library. And I was the first librarian, if I might borrow that title for so humble a job."

The Monitor Library

The first librarian spoke about the filing system, how rapidly it grew, and retrieving information and photographs for news events:

‘The clipping and filing soon became so extensive that others were hired and took over that work...’

Knowledge niche

The library staff is seen as stewards of archival material, whether one's content or institutional history.

The library employees are the newsroom's experts in navigating archives, in print or digital form, across many formats and repositories.

Monitor Archives

The *Monitor's* archives (1980 – present) may be accessed at *csmonitor.com* at no cost, via a Google search module.

The *Monitor's* pre-1980 archives are available from the site via ProQuest, for individual or bundled purchase.

New life / archive content

2007 was the year that past content found:

- * New life;
- * New readers via site;
- * New ways of storytelling, and
- * New library opportunities.

Christian Science Monitor (1908-Current file); May 15, 1948; ProQuest Historical Newspapers Christian Science Monitor (1908 - 1994)
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New life / archive content

An editorial meeting on a Sunday morning in September, 2007 found us thinking about *how* to pay tribute to Luciano Pavarotti.

And ...*who* would write or speak about it?

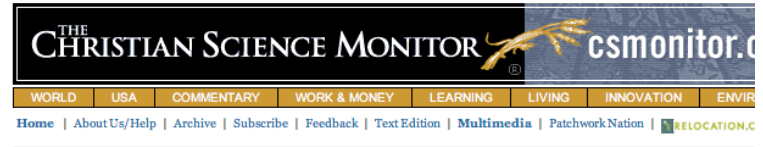


THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR
csmonitor.com

New life / archive content

The best interview with Pavarotti was found by the Library staff and was suggested, along with an audio piece by an opera expert, as our coverage.

It was enjoying a good deal of traffic by the end of the day.



FROM OUR FILES: AN INTERVIEW WITH LUCIANO PAVAROTTI

In 1972, the Monitor spoke with the legendary tenor, who died last night in his hometown of Modena, Italy.

By Louis Snyder

posted September 6, 2007 at 2:00 p.m. EDT

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From the May 26, 1972 edition of the Monitor.

Twelve or so years ago, young students in a school in Modena, Italy, had as their instructor a big, burly fellow townsman, only recently out of the Scuola Magistrale, where teachers undergo an extensive preparatory course of training in a variety of subjects.

His name was Luciano Pavarotti, and with his boyishness and outgoing charm, he must have been able to make lessons in languages, music, religion and gymnastics very palatable to his charges. Just as his awesome size would automatically discourage malactors.

Today Mr. Pavarotti's former pupils must represent a very select coterie in Modena, where, in his own words, "We all begin to go to the opera at the age of four or five." For the big young Modenese teacher of 12 years ago is today one of the world's most sought-after operatic tenors, a singer in the great tradition of Italian bel canto. And everyone in Modena, from youngsters to oldsters, knows from experience what that means.



Fred Plotkin, author, teacher and former performance manager of the Metropolitan Opera discusses the career of his colleague, Luciano Pavarotti.

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR **New life / archive content** csmonitor.com

Oct. 2007: Sputnik at 50
The anniversary commemorating this event, which we had posted on our news calendar, was suggested for a “From our Files” feature.

The reporter who filed a story half a century ago recorded an audio piece to accompany it!

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying an article on the Christian Science Monitor website. The page layout includes a top navigation bar with categories like 'WORLD', 'USA', 'COMMENTARY', 'WORK & MONEY', 'LEARNING', 'LIVING', 'INNOVATION', 'ENVIRONMENT', 'A & E', 'BOOKS', and 'THE HOME FORUM'. The main article title is 'MADE-IN-U.S.S.R. 'MOON' CIRCLES EARTH; SPACE ERA ADVENT JOLTS WASHINGTON'. Below the title, it states 'From the October 5, 1957 edition.' and 'By William H. Stringer | Chief, Washington News Bureau The Christian Science Monitor posted October 05, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. EDT'. There are social media sharing options for E-mail, Print, Letter to the Editor, Republish, del.icio.us, and digg. The article text begins with 'The first earth satellite, hurtling around the earth in its manmade orbit, evoked several Washington reactions:'. A small video player is embedded in the text, showing a reporter speaking. To the right of the article is a sidebar with a 'skillsft' advertisement for Johanna Williams, VP of Human Resources, and a 'Photos of the Day' section featuring a colorful image of a person's hands holding a string of colorful balloons.

New life / archive content

We have since suggested and posted many examples of historic content to commemorate anniversaries, lives, or to augment current coverage of these.

New life / archive content

May 2008: The sixtieth anniversary of Israel's founding:

Weeklong coverage plus two historic items, packaged with other current content and multimedia on the *csmonitor.com* site.

ISRAEL AT 60

«) An Arab veteran of 1948 recalls Palestinian 'catastrophe' - 05/08/08

«) Israel's never-ending struggle for security - 05/08/08

«) Opinion: Israel at 60: So vilified, yet so deserving of praise - 05/08/08

From our files

Jews to rule 'own state' in Palestine - 05/10/1948

Israel recognized by U.S.: Nation launched minus pomp - 05/15/1948

In pictures: Two sides to sixty



New life / old content

We are more attentive to usage data: not only to determine what the Internet audience is currently searching for, but also afterward to measure popularity of search terms.

Web Images Maps News Shopping Gmail more ▼

Google Search Archives [Advanced archive search](#) [Archive search help](#)

News Archives News Articles - Timeline

Browse Top Stories

Recent

- [Last hour](#)
- [Last day](#)
- [Past week](#)
- [Past month](#)

Archives

- [All dates](#)
- 2008**
- [1990-2005](#)
- [Other dates](#)

News Alerts

From our files: Arthur C. Clarke on space exploration
Christian Science Monitor - Mar 19, 2008
In 1977, the MONITOR covered this talk and rare US visit by science fiction writer **Arthur C. Clarke**, who died today. In his remarks he addresses topics from ...
[Arthur C. Clarke, 90, Science Fiction Writer, Dies](#) - New York Times
[Futurist writer Arthur C. Clarke, 90, dies](#) - San Francisco Chronicle
[Space.com](#) - [FOX News](#) - [All 107 related](#) - [Related web pages](#)

After Arthur C. Clarke, Who Are Science Fiction's Visionaries? ...
New York Times - Mar 23, 2008
By DAVE ITZKOFF. Whether **Arthur C. Clarke** is measured by such enduring science-fiction novels as "2001: A Space Odyssey," in which he conceived of a ...
[Arthur C. Clarke buried in Sri Lanka to music](#) - Dallas Morning News - Dallas Morning News...
[ARTHUR C. CLARKE - ARTHUR C. CLARKE](#) - PressDisplay.com (\$2.75)
[ARTHUR C. CLARKE - MR...](#) - OhmyNews International - [All 52 related](#) - [Related web pages](#)

Writer Arthur C. Clarke Dies at 90
Forbes - Mar 18, 2008
By RAVI NESSMAN 03.18.08, 7:24 PM ET. **Arthur C. Clarke**, a visionary science fiction writer who won worldwide acclaim with more than 100 books on space, ...
[How the World Works: The last rendezvous with...](#) - Salon
[Author Arthur C. Clarke dies](#) - RTE.ie
[AFP](#) - [All 4 related](#) - [Related web pages](#)

Remembering Sir Arthur C. Clarke, 1917-2008
Scientific American - Mar 21, 2008
By Graham P. Collins. He wore pajamas and a bathrobe, and a swollen bare foot was propped up on an ottoman. That was the figure cut by the revered ...
[Related web pages](#)

Op-Classic, 1994: Arthur C. Clarke on Killer Comets
New York Times - Mar 23, 2008
Every week, the Opinion section presents an essay from The Times's archive by a columnist or contributor that we hope sheds light on current news or ...
[Related web pages](#)

Arthur C. Clarke 'inspirational but approachable'
New Zealand Herald - Mar 19, 2008
By Edward Gay. Science fiction writer **Arthur C. Clarke** was an inspirational but approachable man who was quick to talk about his books, according to a New ...
[Related web pages](#)

New life / archive content

Our library staff initiates these “From our Files” items, coordinates with our photo and web staff, and prepares them for posting prior to noon EST each day in order to have them ready by time of peak traffic on our web site(12 – 4 p.m.).

New life / archive content

Our web director is very enthusiastic about the *Monitor's* historical content, and would like us to post some of it every day.

While this program is still in development, the concept has helped us significantly with our Centennial site and historical facts relating to the paper.

When we noticed that Arthur C. Clarke was one of the most searched-for names on the internet when he died in March of 2008, we posted an article about a rare 1977 speech he gave in Boston.

Arthur C. Clarke:

Total site page views (3/20-6/8): 13,086,185

Story page views: 944



AP / FILE

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR csmonitor.com New life / archive content

We are now keeping SEO in mind when writing news summaries, as well as finding key details to include in them.

We have also begun including photos with these summaries; for example, a 1957 Yves Saint Laurent article reprinted in June of 2008 (right).



Designer Yves Saint Laurent in Paris in June 1998. NEWSCOM/FILE

FROM OUR FILES: YVES SAINT LAURENT AND TEAM SUCCEED DIOR

In 1957, the Monitor covered the launch of the career of Yves Saint Laurent, who died on June 1, when he became head of Christian Dior's couture house at age 21. He would go on to become of the most influential fashion designers of the past century.

By Kathleen Cannell
posted June 02, 2008 at 11:45 am EST

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From the November 11, 1957 issue of The Christian Science Monitor

Yves-Mathieu Saint Laurent has been chosen to spark creative design in the Maison Christian Dior, one of a team of four to head the firm which currently does an annual twenty-million-dollar business. This news, eagerly awaited by the fashion world, has just been announced by Marcel Boussac, millionaire French textile magnate and financier of the firm, and Jacques Rouel, its business administrator.

Feedback positive

Feedback has been positive on the historic content, including that received from younger readers and those on social media networks.



Jodi Crump Beatty (Principia) wrote
at 9:41pm on June 11th, 2008

I enjoyed the Yves Saint Laurent re-run of the article recently from when YSL was brand new on the scene. Very good read.

facebook

Summary

Since this was initiated last September, historic content has been used to:

- * Tell stories for a web audience;
- * Mark historic occasions and lives;
- * Augment current coverage;
- * Respond to news events, Internet audience interests.

More traffic, sales

Our article sales and traffic increased after Google launched its News Archive Search in 2006.

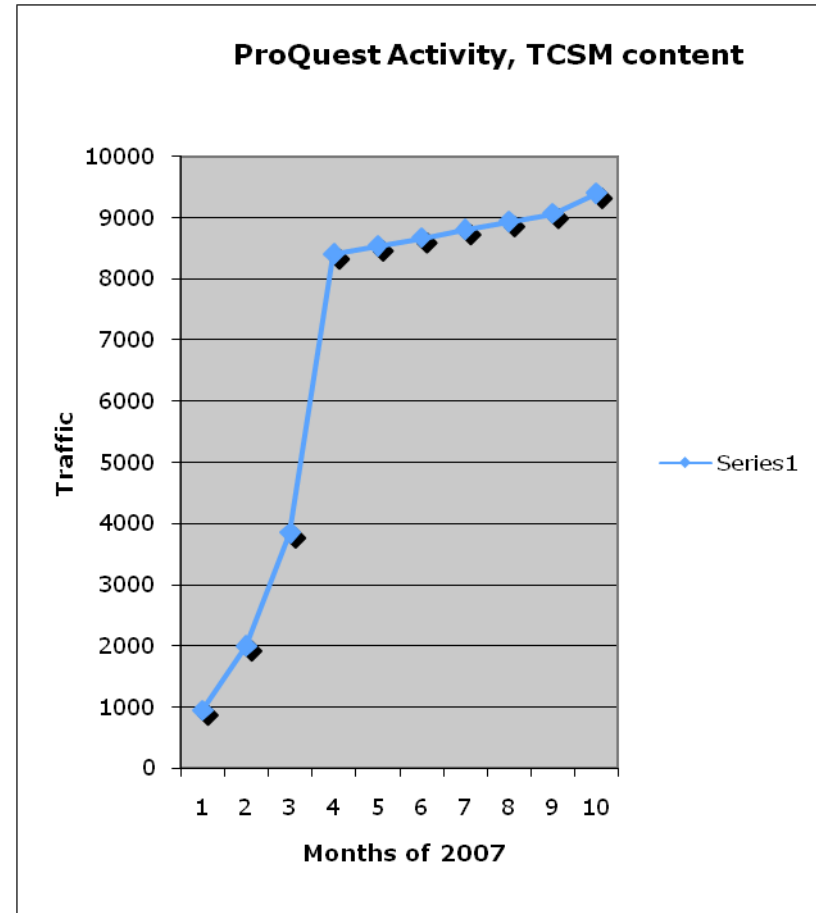
We enjoyed a three-fold increase in traffic after March 2007 and a 33% increase in sales of historic content.

More traffic, sales

Traffic metrics:

January	2007	950
March	2007	3848
April	2007	8407
October	2007	9400

Source: ProQuest



More traffic, sales

Search aids / Promotional tools

ProQuest is offering article bundling tools where librarians can enter searches with keywords and date ranges, as well as selected bundles of articles, for purchase.

Monitor Centennial

Our library staff has been involved in many aspects of our Centennial, including suggesting news events and obtaining archival content for the Centennial web site.

MONITOR PICKS



Pulitzer Prizes



The Power of One



Ca

1958 - 2008: Reporters on the Moon

In 1958, for its 50th anniversary, the Monitor sketched out what life like in 2008. Click here to read the story.

What do you think the world will look like in 2058?

Comments:

Your Name:

Your e-mail:

Monitor Timeline

Roll over the timeline to see a major news event of each year. Click to see the Monitor story on that event.

1908 1918 1928 1938 1948

Conclusion

Historic content has:

- * Helped tell stories for readers in a different way;
- * Supported our multimedia efforts;
- * Provided another opportunity for proactive librarianship;
- * Increased traffic and revenue

Thank you

Please send your Questions, Comments, Ideas,
Success stories to:

Montgomeryl@csmonitor.com