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INTRODUCTION

I. WHAT IS LIVE BLOG?

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Live Blog is a next-generation open source web tool created by Sourcefabric to enable both individuals and teams to report live breaking news from anywhere, working only in a web browser.

With journalists from the BBC, the Guardian, Le Monde, Voralberger Nachrichten and Zeit Online all contributing to its design, Live Blog can justly be said to have been designed *by* journalists *for* journalists.

Originally developed for GEN, the Global Editors Network, Live Blog now forms part of Superdesk, the open source project that will enable news organisations to manage all of their newsroom activities, including planning, ingest, writing, publication and archiving.

Source code for Superdesk is available to download from <https://github.com/sourcefabric/Superdesk/>

Live Blog is inspired by the best features of existing live-blogging tools. It gives journalists and editors the ability to curate live content coming from their own correspondents together with selected material from external sources including Google, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube and Soundcloud.

Being web-based, Live Blog can accept contributions from anywhere, creating new opportunities for independent newsrooms to pool their resources together and collaborate to produce rich live blogs. Live Blog is easy to integrate into your website and alongside existing newsroom systems. The intention is to enhance the tools you're already using, rather than replace them.

The availability of Live Blog means that independent news organisations are now able to emulate the live-blogging capabilities of big newsrooms such as the BBC, the Guardian, the New York Times, and Le Figaro, without having to hire a programming team or buy in an expensive proprietary software solution.

Whether you use it to cover a major set-piece such as an election, a breaking news story, a sporting event or anything else, live-blogging with Live Blog will help you drive traffic and sustain reader interest with engaging content. Live Blog can also facilitate organisations looking to increase revenue by means of sponsorship, contextual adverts or paid subscriptions.

Sourcefabric is keen for as many individuals and organisations as possible to test out Live Blog for themselves, to deploy it in their workflow, and to get involved in shaping its development.

USING LIVE BLOG

- 2. THE LIVE BLOG INTERFACE**
- 3. CREATING A LIVE BLOG**
- 4. PUBLISHING YOUR LIVE BLOG**
- 5. CREATING CONTENT AND USING SOURCES**
- 6. USING THE TIMELINE**
- 7. CONFIGURING YOUR LIVE BLOG**
- 8. USERS AND COLLABORATORS**
- 9. MEDIA ARCHIVE**

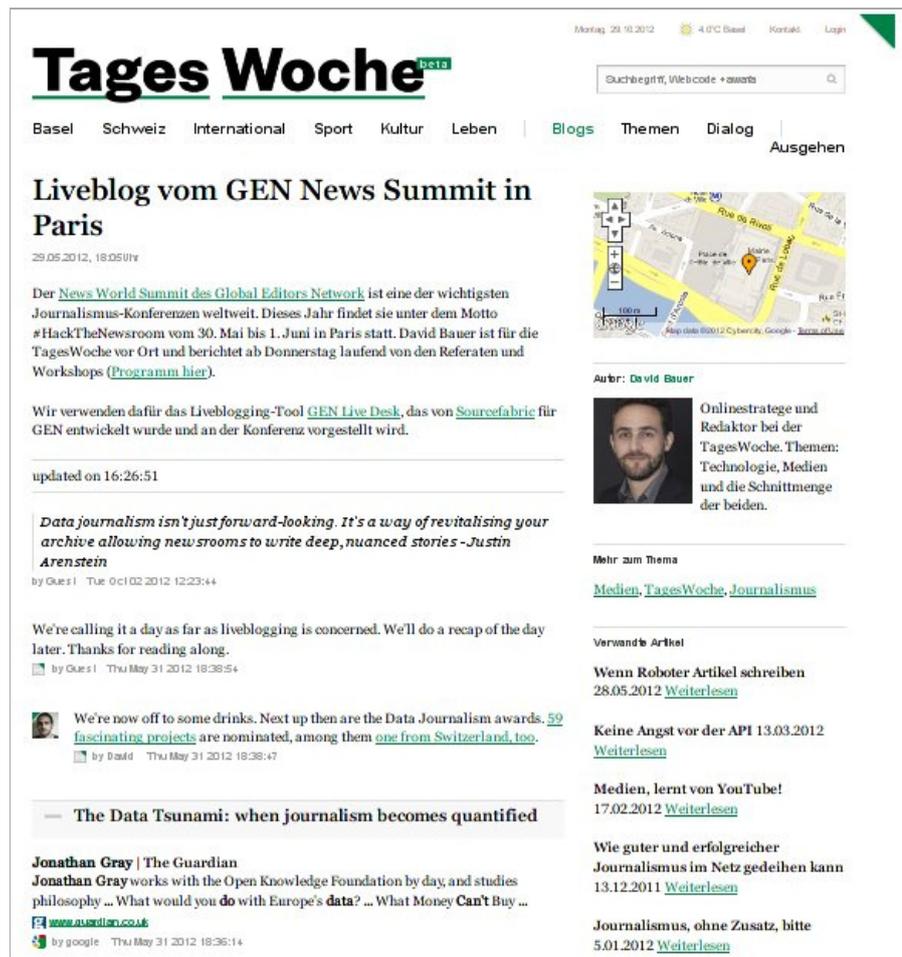
2. THE LIVE BLOG INTERFACE

Live Blog presents two different interfaces: one for the reader, and one for the journalist.

WHAT THE READER SEES

The reader sees the results of your live-blogging work as a timeline on your website, with the latest items at the top. New items appear immediately, without needing to refresh the page.

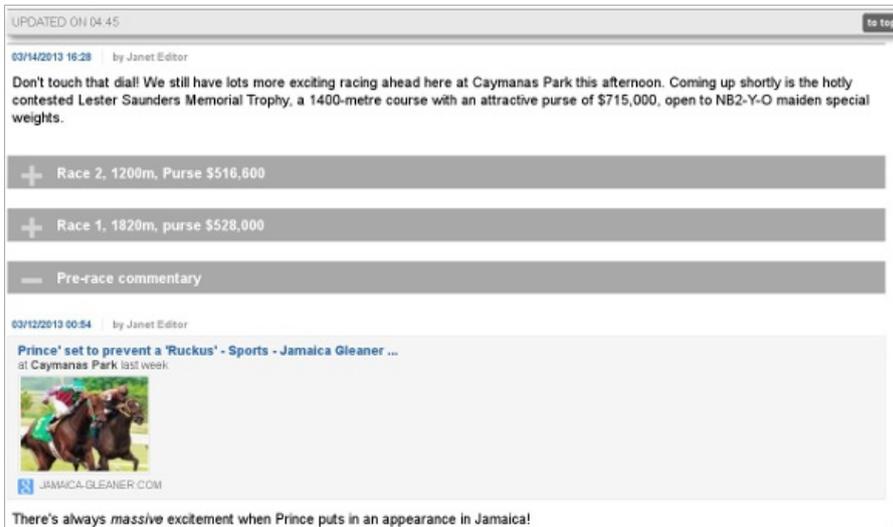
The timeline created by Live Blog can be embedded wherever you choose on your site, and can be styled to fit seamlessly with the rest of your content.



The screenshot shows a live blog on the website 'TagesWoche'. The page header includes the site name, navigation links (Basel, Schweiz, International, Sport, Kultur, Leben, Blogs, Themen, Dialog, Ausgehen), and a search bar. The main article is titled 'Liveblog vom GEN News Summit in Paris' and is dated 29.05.2012, 18:05 Uhr. The article text discusses the 'News World Summit des Global Editors Network' and mentions the use of the 'GEN Live Desk' tool. A map of Paris is included, showing the location of the summit. The author is identified as David Bauer, an online strategy and editor at TagesWoche. The page also features a 'Mehr zum Thema' section with links to 'Medien, TagesWoche, Journalismus' and a 'Verwandte Artikel' section with several related articles, including 'Wenn Roboter Artikel schreiben', 'Keine Angst vor der API', 'Medien, lernt von YouTube!', 'Wie guter und erfolgreicher Journalismus im Netz gedeihen kann', and 'Journalismus, ohne Zusatz, bitte'.

A busy live blog can end up containing a large number of items. This can make it difficult for readers to get an overview of the content without having to do a lot of scrolling. Live Blog enables journalists and editors to 'wrap up' their posts into sections when a natural break occurs. If you are live-blogging from an afternoon of horse racing, for example, you can use wrap-ups to organise the posts you and your colleagues made during each race.

Wrapped sections appear as sub-headings with a plus sign next to them, inviting the reader to click and reveal the hidden posts.



Once clicked, the plus sign turns to a minus, and the items contained within the wrap-up section are displayed.

Find out how to create wrap-up sections in the chapter *Creating content and using sources*.

Another handy feature of Live Blog is that every post in the public timeline is formatted as an HTML anchor, enabling that the reader to share and link directly to any post of interest.

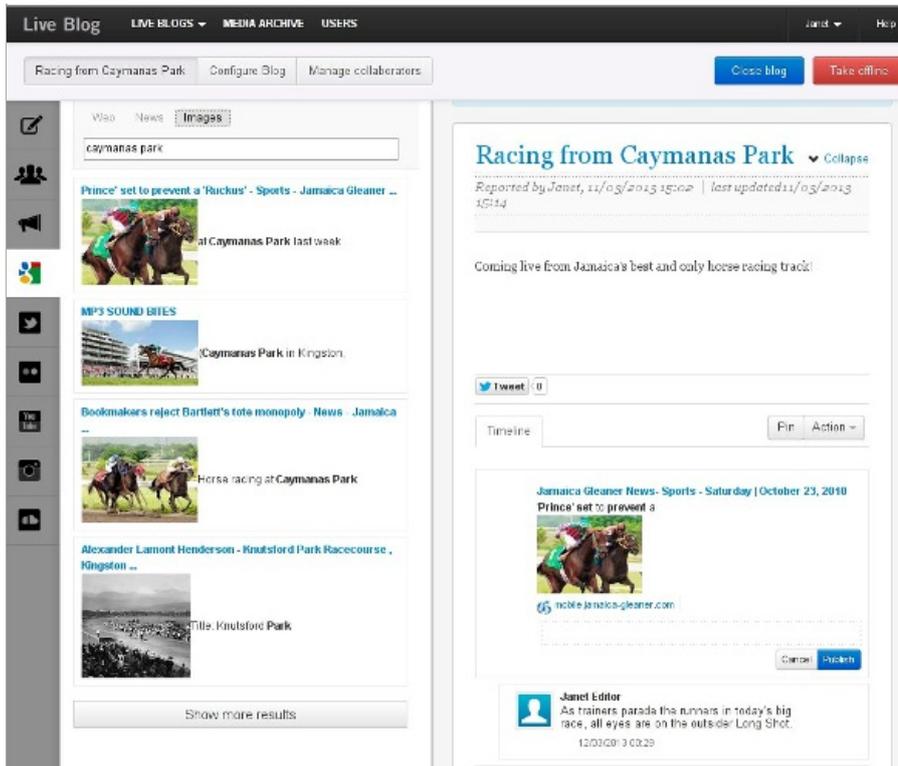


Readers can also click on the adjacent **Share** link to share a post via the leading social media services and email.



WHAT THE JOURNALIST SEES

The journalist's view of Live Blog is a dashboard where content is originated or sourced, and then published in the live stream.



The interface consists of two panes in your web browser window. The left pane organises your content sources, while the right pane contains the live blog's timeline, into which items are dragged and published.

This timeline is very similar to what the reader sees, but has features for journalists and editors such as the ability to re-order and delete posts, and to add comments to them.

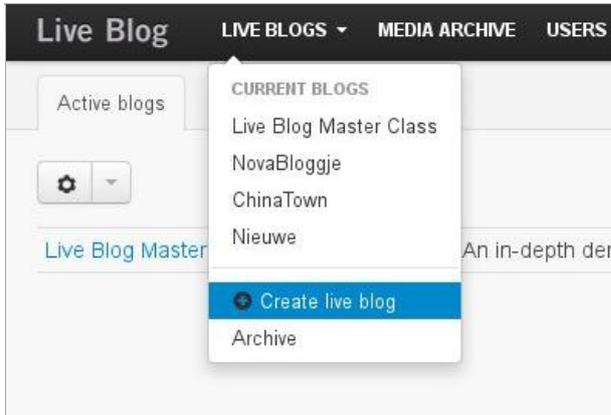
The chapters *Creating content and using sources* and *Using the timeline* detail the publishing process.

Only authorised users can access the journalist's view of Live Blog. User accounts are set up by the system administrator.

Live blogs are much more interesting for readers if they contain a variety of voices rather than a monologue. With Live Blog, many individual contributors can be logged into the journalist's interface simultaneously, adding fresh content and helping to increase the pace of posting.

3. CREATING A LIVE BLOG

To create a live blog, click on **Live Blogs** in the menu, and then on **Create live blog**.



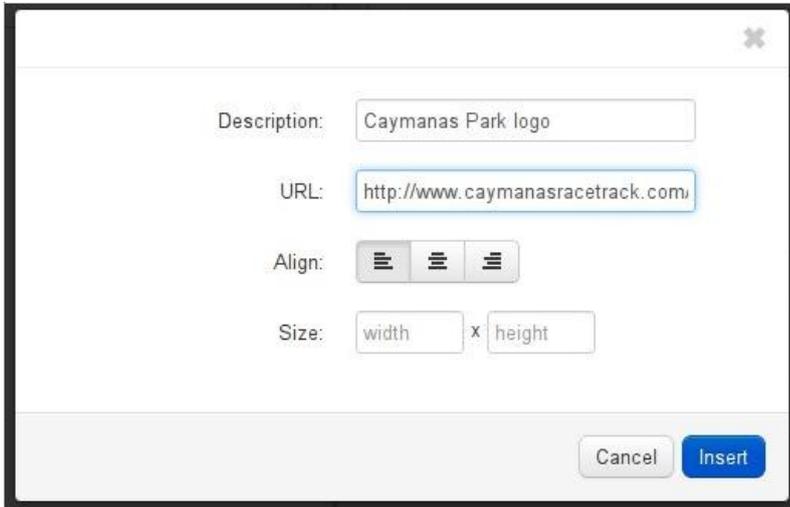
You will be prompted to choose a **Language** and title for your new live blog, and to provide a brief description.

Select 'default' as the type of blog, unless you or your system administrator have set up a custom blog type for your publication. (For information on setting up custom blog types, see the chapter *Configuring your live blog*).

A screenshot of a form titled 'Add Live blog'. The form has a close button (X) in the top right corner. It contains the following fields: 'Language' with a dropdown menu set to 'English'; 'Configure type of blog' with a radio button selected for 'default'; a text input field for the title containing 'Racing from Caymanas Park'; and a larger text area for the description containing 'Coming live from Jamaica's best and only horse racing track!'. At the bottom right, there are two buttons: 'Cancel' and 'Save changes'.

Click the **Save** button, and your new live blog will appear, empty of content and ready for you to start using. If you change your mind about the title or description, you can change these simply by clicking on the relevant text in the right-hand pane and editing it.

You can also at this stage add an image to go along with your live blog's title and description. Click in the space for description text, and a formatting toolbar will appear. Click on the image button, and a dialog box will pop up.

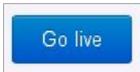


At the moment this dialog won't let you upload an image from your computer. You have to paste the link to an image already available somewhere on the Web into the URL box and press the Insert button.

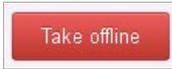
Tip: To gain a little more space for viewing items in the timeline, you can click on the **Collapse** link to the right of your live blog's title. The description of the live blog will then be hidden until you choose to click on **Expand**.

4. PUBLISHING YOUR LIVE BLOG

When you are ready to start blogging, click the blue **Go Live** button in the top-right corner.



You'll be asked whether you're sure. If you click Yes, and all goes well, the blue Go live button will be replaced by a red **Take offline** button.



Click on the white **Configure Blog** button in the top-left corner. This will take you to your live blog's configuration page. Select a theme for the embedded content from the available themes using the drop-down menu. The embed code will then appear in the **Embed script** field.

Embed Theme	default
Embed script	<pre>},'language': 'en','blog': 'http://master.example.com/resources/my/LiveDesk/Blog/2','FrontendServer': //master.example.com');</script><script data-main="http://master.example.com/content/lib/livedesk- embed/themes/default" src="//master.example.com/content/lib/livedesk-embed/scripts/js/core/require.js"> </script></pre>
Frontend server	//master.example.com

Click into the script text box, select all of it, and copy it to your clipboard (with the keyboard shortcuts Control+A, Control+C).

This script can then be embedded in the web page where you want your new live blog to appear. Determining the exact method for embedding scripts into your publication will depend on what content management system or publishing platform you are using. This is a job for your web editor or designer.

You will not normally need to pay attention to the **Frontend server** field. This is only required when Live Blog is running in multiple instance mode, when there is a separate, cached instance for serving the embeddable content. In this case, inputting the name of the frontend server into this field will update the embed script with the correct information.

5. CREATING CONTENT AND USING SOURCES

You will notice a number of tabs along the left-hand side of the left pane in Live Blog, each with a different icon.

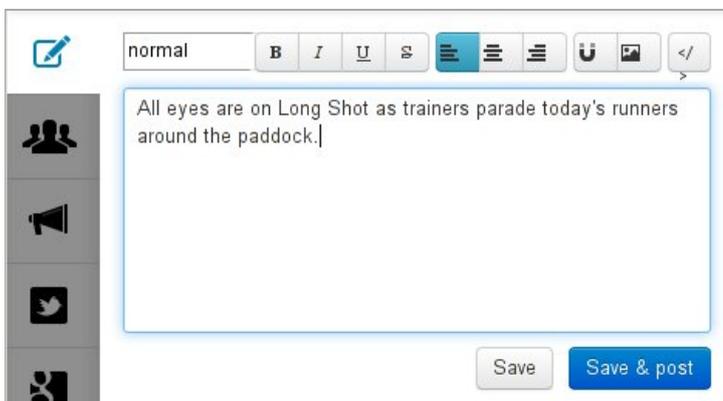


These tabs allow you to switch between different sources of content. Reading from top to bottom, these content sources are:

- Edit
- Collaborators
- Advertisements
- Google
- Twitter
- Flickr
- YouTube
- Instagram
- Soundcloud

EDIT TAB

This is where you create your own content.



When click you into the text area, you will notice that a formatting bar appears above. You can use this to do basic styling (bold, italic, underline, strikethrough), align your text (left, centre, right), insert a web link, and insert an image. Finally, there is a button you can use to edit the HTML formatting of your post, or to insert code of your own.

To the left of the formatting toolbar, and remaining in view permanently, is a drop-down menu which, by default, contains four style options: normal, link, quote and wrapup.



Normal

This is the style which you will use to create normal text posts. It results in a post that looks like this:



Link

If you choose link style, a link field is added above the content text area. When you paste a web link into this field and press enter, Live Blog will fetch summary content from your link and insert it into your post. If you wish, you can then edit this fetched content or add a comment of your own.



Be aware that any text you type into the fetched content will acquire the formatting of that content. If you are familiar with editing HTML tags, you can adjust the formatting as you wish using the 'edit HTML' facility in the toolbar, which has a button like this:



Here's how that post looks in the timeline:



Quote

If you select this option, the whole of your text entry will be styled as a quotation.

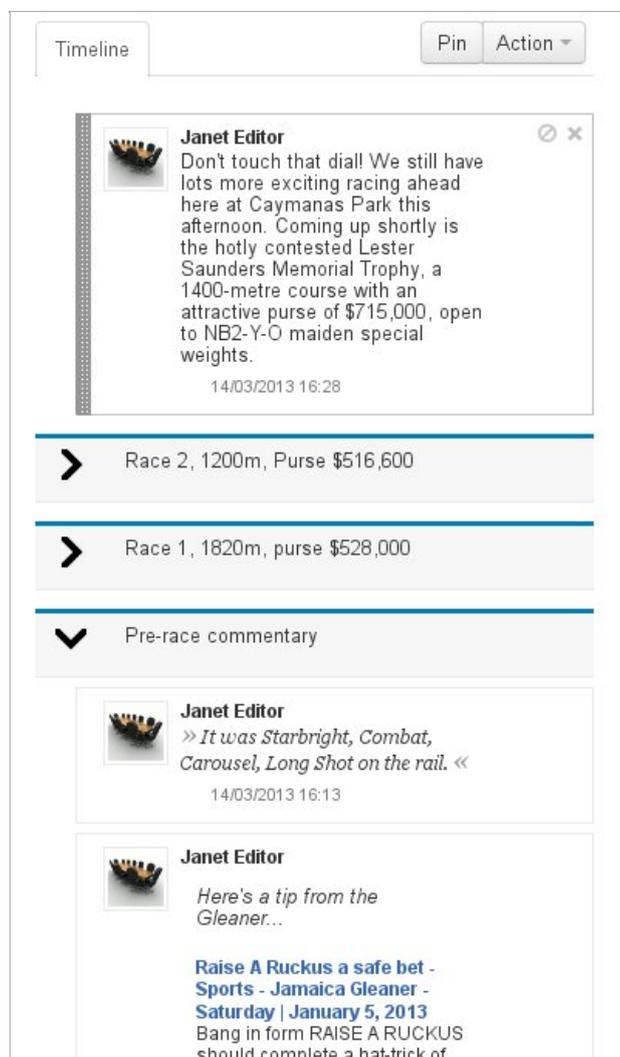


Wrapup

This is a special option, to be used when a natural break occurs in your live blogging, and you want to 'wrap up' the preceding posts in the timeline into a distinct section. The text you enter will be the name of the wrapup section, so choose something which sums up the section well.

If you were covering an afternoon at Caymanas Park horse-racing course, for example, you might entitle the first wrapup section 'Pre-race commentary', the second wrapup section 'Race 1, 1820m, purse \$528,000', and the third wrapup section 'Race 2, 1200m, Purse \$516,600'.

When you're ready, click **Save & post**, and the wrapup section will be created.



This is how wrapup sections look in the journalist's timeline. Clicking on the arrowhead will reveal the contents of the wrapup section.

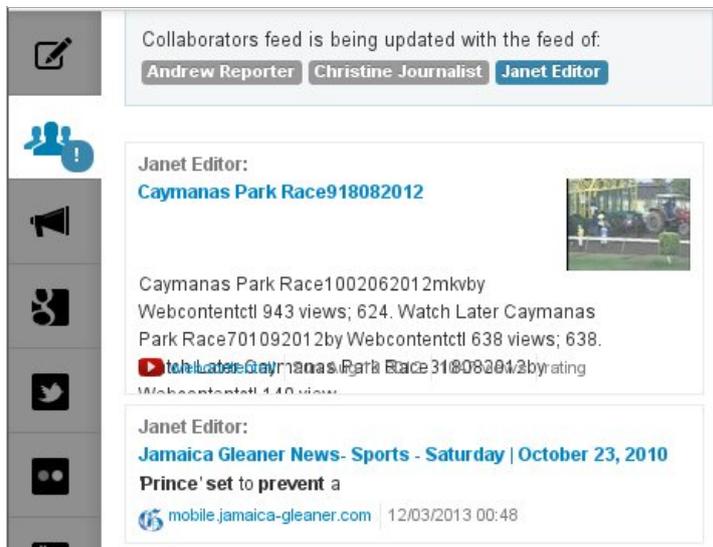
Like other posts, wrapup posts can be unpublished or deleted, but they cannot be edited once they have been saved, whether or not they have yet been placed in the timeline.

If you accidentally place a wrapup post in the wrong position in the timeline, unpublish it and place it in the timeline again.

Tip: When you're drafting a post in the Edit tab, make sure you click **Save** or **Save & post** before you switch to another tab. If you don't, your work will be lost.

COLLABORATORS TAB

Collaborators are the other journalists who are working with you on the live blog. When you select the collaborators tab, you will see a row of user names in blue buttons, and below them a timeline of content items that has been created by those users.



If you wish, you can filter out content from one or more of your collaborators. When you click on a username button, it will change to a grey colour and you will no longer see content from that user until you click on their button again. In the above screenshot, both Andrew Reporter and Christine Journalist have been filtered, so that we can temporarily concentrate on content from Janet Editor.

The collaborators tab has a notification feature which can alert you to events occurring within the collaborators tab even when you have navigated away from it and are working in another content tab. Notifications are turned off by default. To turn on notifications, click on the circled exclamation mark on the collaborators tab icon. The circle will turn orange indicating that Live Blog will alert you to changes happening within this tab, for instance a new post. Clicking again on the circled exclamation mark will turn off notifications.

When you're working in another tab, a counter on the collaborators tab shows how many new unpublished posts have been created by your colleagues.



ADVERTISEMENTS TAB

The functionality of this tab has not been enabled yet. The advertisements tab will allow you to organise advertisements and place them into your timeline.

GOOGLE TAB

This tab allows you to search for relevant external content conveniently within the Live Blog interface.

Web
News
Images

Prince' set to prevent a 'Ruckus' - Sports - Jamaica Gleaner ...



at **Caymanas Park** last week

MP3 SOUND BITES



(**Caymanas Park** in Kingston,

Bookmakers reject Bartlett's tote monopoly - News - Jamaica ...



Horse racing at **Caymanas Park**

Alexander Lamont Henderson - Knutsford Park Racecourse , Kingston ...



Title: **Knutsford Park**

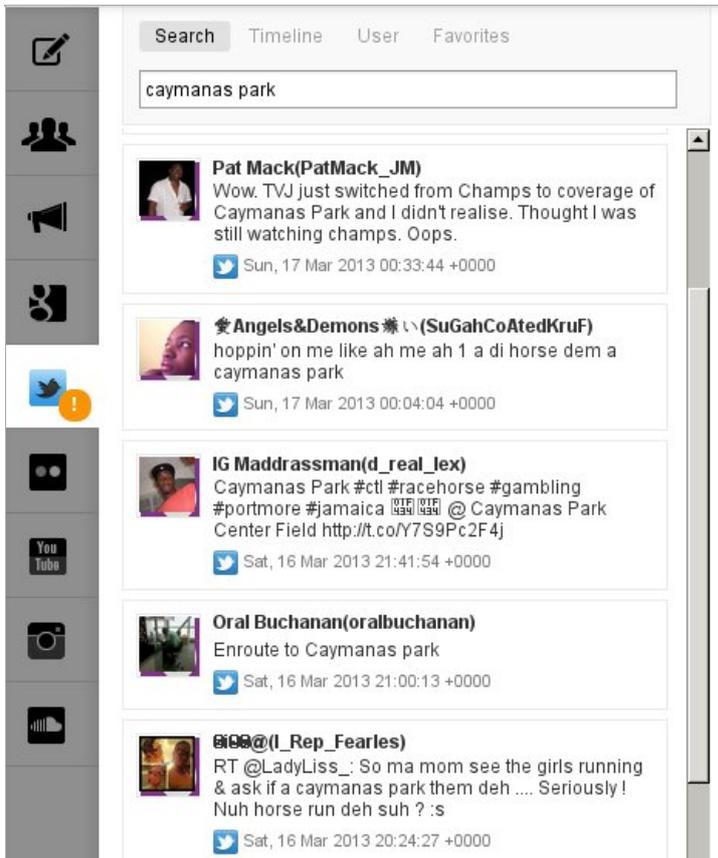
Show more results

Just like in the familiar Google search interface, you can switch between results from **Web**, **News** and **Images**, by clicking the links above the search field. A limited number of results are shown, but you can request more by clicking the **Show More Results** button at the end of the page.

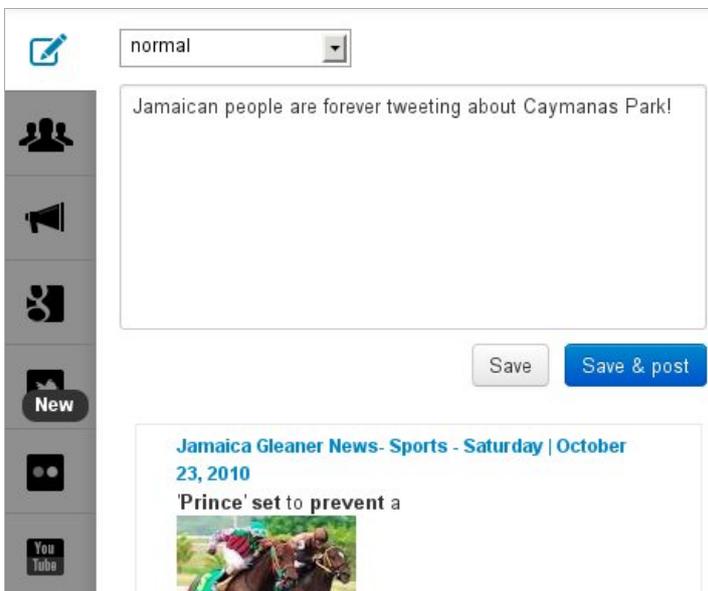
TWITTER TAB

The next tab down lets you search Twitter for relevant items. This means you can incorporate different voices into your timeline, as well as encouraging your readers to signal their participation in your live blog by using a hashtag of your suggestion.

As with the Google tab, Live Blog's Twitter search function will show a limited number of results to begin with. Scroll down to review these, and if you wish to see more, click on the **See More Results** button at the end.

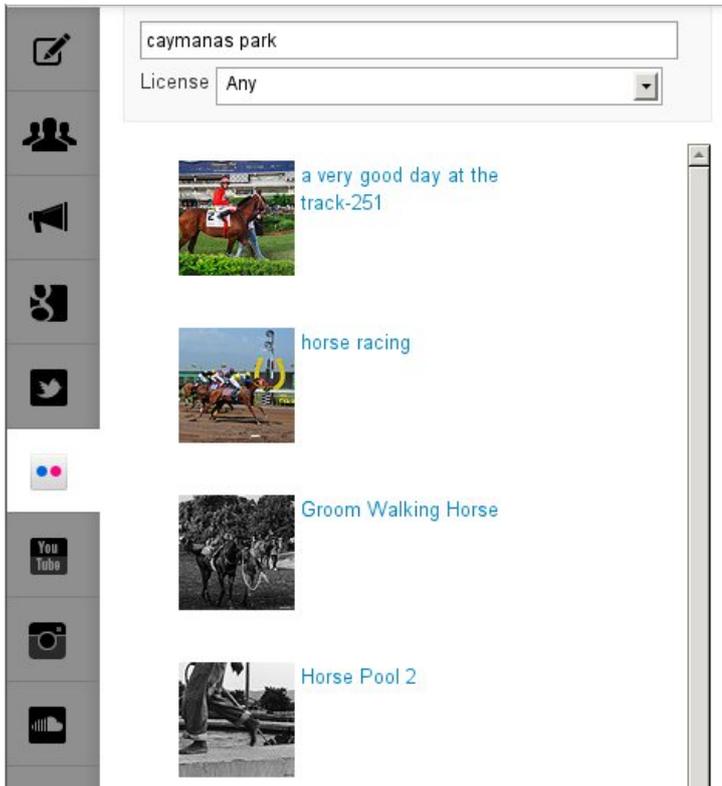


Like the collaborators tab, the Twitter tab has a notification facility. Turn notifications on by clicking on the circled exclamation mark on the Twitter tab icon. It will go orange to show that notifications are enabled. When you are working in, for example, the Edit tab, and someone sends a tweet that matches your existing search keywords, a 'New' button on the Twitter tab will alert you.



FLICKR TAB

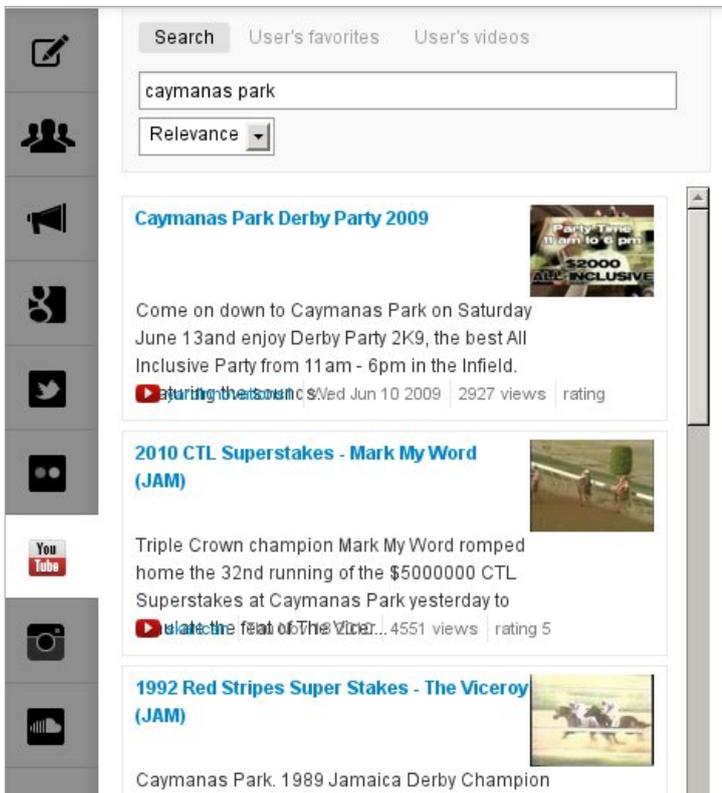
Search here for images hosted on the popular image sharing service. A drop-down menu enables you to filter your search results by copyright licence (e.g. Any, or Attribution-Sharealike).



As before, if you wish to see more results, click on the **See More Results** button at the end of the page.

YOUTUBE TAB

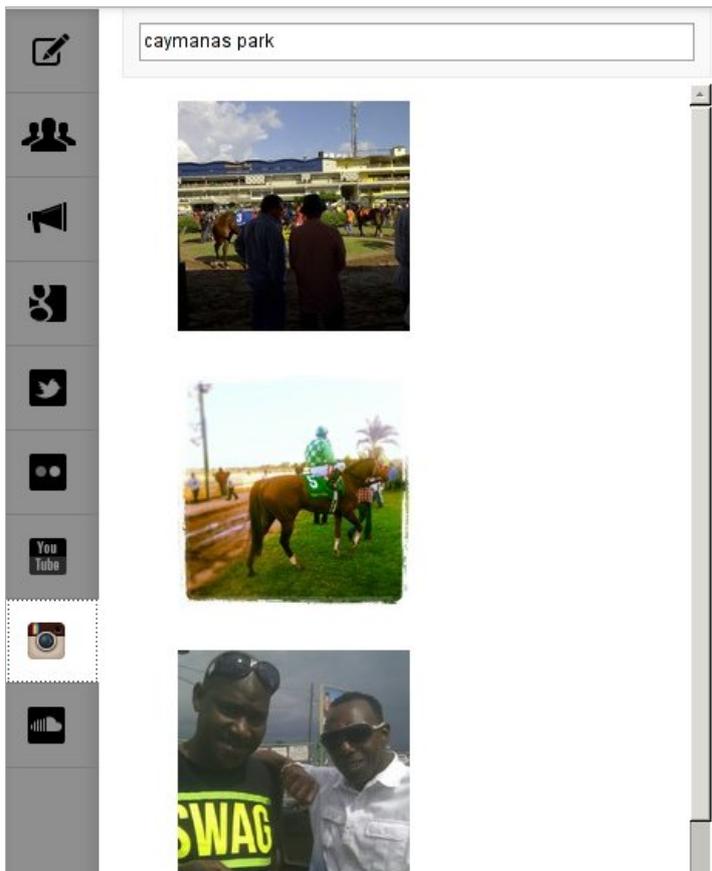
The YouTube search tab features a straightforward keyword search, as well as search by user's favourites and user's videos. There is also a drop-down menu which permits you to order search results by relevance, date published, number of views, and rating.



When published to the timeline, video items are transformed into the a YouTube embedded player, complete with the familiar controls.

INSTAGRAM TAB

This tab allows you to search for images from the popular Instagram photo sharing service, with found items presented in a simple list. The photographer's accompanying text and hashtags are included as tooltip-style popups available when you mouse over.



SOUNDCLOUD TAB

Live Blog now also allows you to search for audio hosted on SoundCloud.

□

When published to the timeline, audio items are transformed into a SoundCloud player, complete with play/pause button, waveform, and like and share buttons, which can be used by your readers if they have a SoundCloud account.

□

SEARCHES ARE REMEMBERED

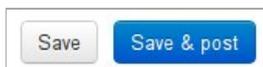
Don't worry about search terms and results being lost when you switch between external source tabs. Live Blog saves them, so they'll still be there when you switch back.

6. USING THE TIMELINE

The timeline, in the right-hand pane of the journalist's view of Live Blog, is where live content is published. In a nutshell, to publish an item you just click on it in the left-hand pane, drag it over to the right-hand pane, and drop it into position in the timeline. But there are a few extra details that are worth knowing.

PUBLISHING AND RE-ORDERING ITEMS

When you're writing a post in the Edit tab, the buttons below the text box offer you the choice to **Save** or **Save & post**.



If you choose **Save & post**, your item will be inserted at the top of the timeline on the right, and will be immediately visible to readers on your website.

If you choose **Save** only, as you might do if you are preparing an item for later insertion, it will appear in the list of items in the Edit tab, but not in the timeline.

When you move your pointer over an unpublished item in the left pane, a grab bar will appear on its left side, indicating that you can move it.



When you're ready to publish your item, go ahead and drag it over to the timeline. It will be immediately published to the live blog, at the top of the timeline.

Once posts have been published, you can drag them up and down to change their position in the timeline.

Tip: The Edit tab is different from the other source tabs in that, when you drag an item to the timeline in the right pane, it disappears from the left pane. In the other source tabs, a copy of the item remains in the left pane even when it has been dragged to the timeline.

PUBLISHING ITEMS FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES

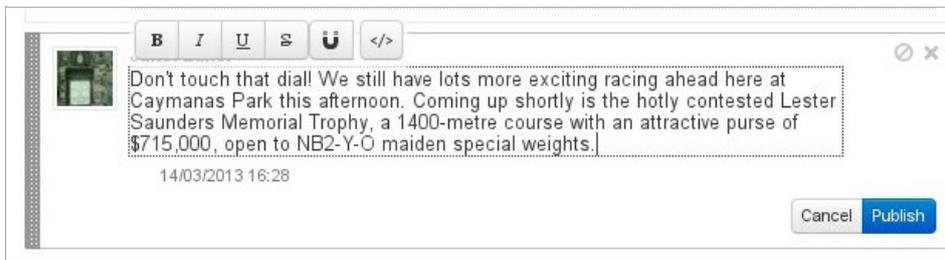
When you drag items originating from external sources, i.e. from the Google, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, Instagram and Soundcloud search tabs, into the timeline, they are not immediately published. You get the chance to check them over one more time, and also to add your own comment, if you wish, by clicking into the empty text field below the item. If you do so, a formatting toolbar will appear offering you basic text formatting functions plus the ability to add web links and HTML code.



When you've added any comment you wish to, and are sure that you want the item to appear in your live blog, click the blue **Publish** button. Alternatively, if you've had second thoughts about posting that dubious hot tip, click the **Cancel** button, which will remove the item from the timeline.

EDITING PUBLISHED ITEMS

You can make corrections and additions to your posts even after they have been published in the timeline. Simply click into the text of the post, and it will become editable. To save your changes, either click the blue Publish button or simply click away from the post.



UNPUBLISHING AND DELETING PUBLISHED ITEMS

When you move your mouse pointer over a item which has been posted to the timeline, two symbols will appear in the top-right corner: a circle with a diagonal line through it, and an 'X'.



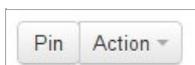
If you click the circle, your post will be unpublished. This means that it will be sent back to the left-hand pane. Note that, whichever tab it originated in, a post which has been unpublished from the timeline will always return into the Edit tab.

If you click on the 'X', the item will be deleted from the live blog. If the deleted item originated from an external source tab, you can retrieve it from that tab if you decide you want to republish it.

However, if the item was a post written in the Edit tab, deleting it is permanent. It will not reappear in the list of items in the Edit tab.

PINNING

If content is being added to the timeline quickly by your fellow contributors, but you want some extra time to read a post before it gets buried under an avalanche of new items, you can click the **Pin** button at the top of the timeline. This will 'pin' the timeline as it was at that moment, with no new posts visible until you click the button again to 'unpin' it.



FILTERING YOUR VIEW OF THE TIMELINE

You can filter your view of items in the timeline by clicking on the **Action** button to the right of the **Pin** button at the top of the timeline. From a drop-down menu you can opt to show just advertisements, link posts, normal posts, quotes, or wrapup posts. To remove the filter and see all posts, select **Show All**.



7. CONFIGURING YOUR LIVE BLOG

The **Configure Blog** button opens up your live blog's configuration section.

Only a limited number of configuration options are available in this section at the moment. More will be added as development of Live Blog progresses.

Items currently configurable are: the blog's embed script, embed theme and frontend server; the language for the blog; and 'blog types'.

The embedding options are covered in the chapter 'Publishing your live blog'.

The languages currently available are English, French and German.

BLOG TYPES

The ability to configure blog types is an emerging feature of Live Blog. Your chosen blog type controls what options will be available in the dropdown menu in the Edit tab (see the chapter *Creating content and using sources*). It is configurable both when the blog is first created (see the chapter *Creating a live blog*) and at any time afterwards in the blog configuration.

The default blog type contains the four standard posting styles, viz normal, link, quote and wrapup. Custom blog types consist of the four standard styles of the default blog type, hard-coded, plus your customisations.

Currently the only customisation available when you create a new blog type is the addition of predefined posts.

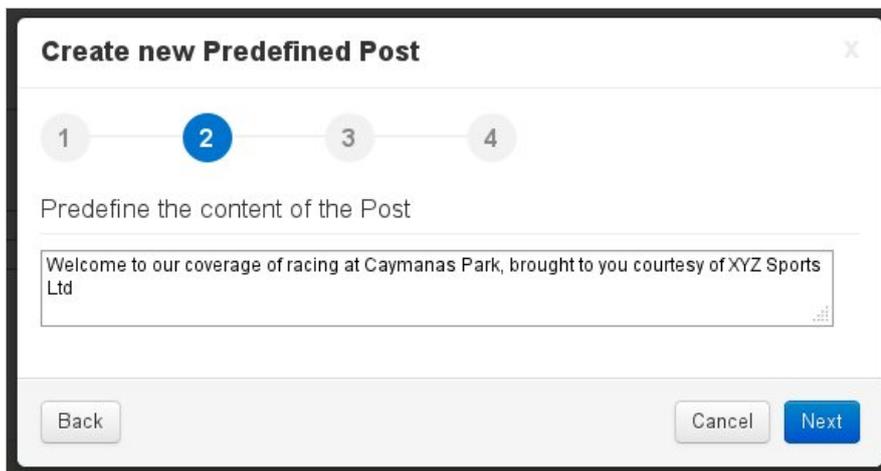
For example, you may wish to create a new blog type with predefined posts which welcome readers at the start of your live coverage and bid them farewell when you finish. To do this, click the **Add New** button.



The Add New Blog Type dialog will appear. First, give your new blog type a name, e.g. Greetings. Then click **Create New Predefined Post**. Proceed through the four steps of setting up a new predefined post.

Step one: Enter the post name, eg 'Welcome'.

Step two: Type the text of your predefined post, eg 'Welcome to our coverage of racing at Caymanas Park, brought to you courtesy of XYZ Sports Ltd'



Step three: Customise font style and colour.

Step four: Customise the background.

Click Save. You will be returned to the Add New Blog Type dialog, where you can add further predefined posts in the same way. If you need to edit a predefined post, or delete it, hovering your mouse pointer over the post name will bring up the required controls.

Add New Blog Type

Blog type name
Greetings

- Welcome
- Goodbye**  

 Create New Predefined Post

Cancel Save changes

When you have added all the predefined posts you wish your custom blog type to contain, click the **Save Changes** button. Your custom blog type will now be listed in the configuration section, below the default blog type. If you select the radio button corresponding to your custom blog type, and click **Save & Close**, your predefined posts should now be available in the Edit tab in addition to the standard four styles.

8. USERS AND COLLABORATORS

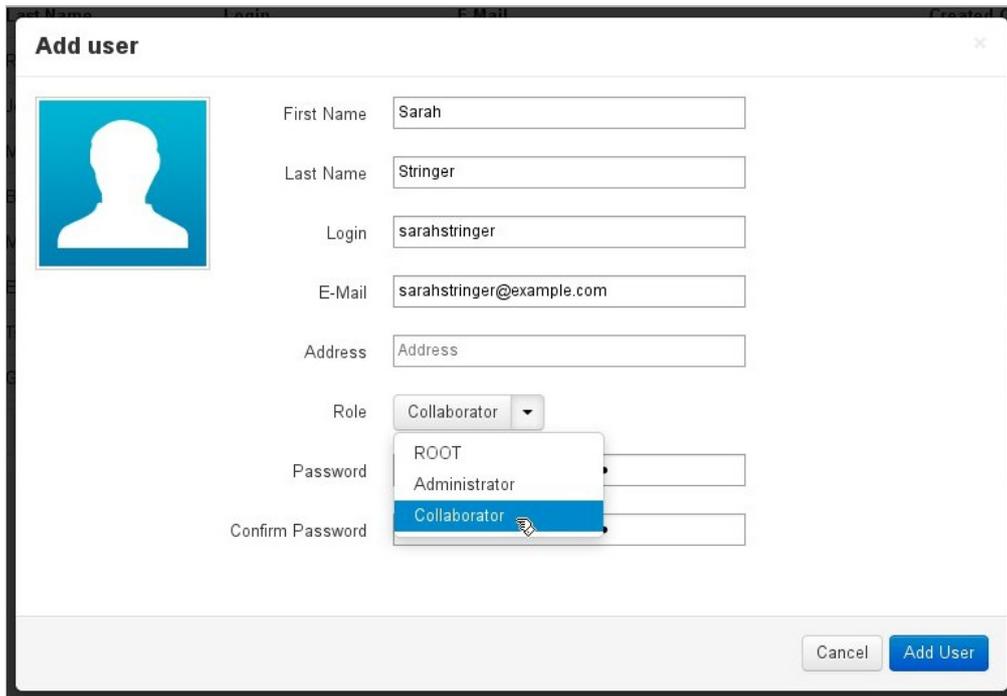
When Live Blog is first set up, at least one administrator-level user (*Root*) is created. The administrator can then add journalists and other contributors as required, by clicking the **Add User** button in the Users section.



The screenshot shows a user management interface. At the top left is a blue 'Add User' button. To its right is a search bar with the text 'Search' and a search icon. Below these is a table with the following columns: #, First Name, Last Name, Login, E-Mail, and Created On. The table contains two rows of data.

#	First Name	Last Name	Login	E-Mail	Created On
2	Andrew	Reporter	 Andrew	Andrew.Reporter@email.addr	11/03/2013 11:47
3	Christine	Journalist	 Christine	Christine.Journalist@email.addr	11/03/2013 11:47

In the Add User dialog, the user's login name and password are set up, along with other basic details. Additionally, there is a drop-down menu in which the user's role is defined. The standard available roles are *Administrator* or *Collaborator*.



The 'Add user' dialog is a form with several input fields and a role selection dropdown. The fields are: First Name (Sarah), Last Name (Stringer), Login (sarahstringer), E-Mail (sarahstringer@example.com), Address (Address), Password, and Confirm Password. The Role dropdown is currently set to 'Collaborator' and is open, showing options for 'ROOT', 'Administrator', and 'Collaborator'. The 'Collaborator' option is highlighted. At the bottom right are 'Cancel' and 'Add User' buttons.

Users with administrator privileges are able to do pretty much anything on the system, including adding and deleting users, and creating, publishing and deleting live blogs.

Collaborators are much more limited. They are only able to write posts, not publish them. A collaborator's posts will need to be approved and published by a user with administrative privileges.

Once users have been set up on the system, users can be added as contributors to individual live blogs via the **Manage Collaborators** button.



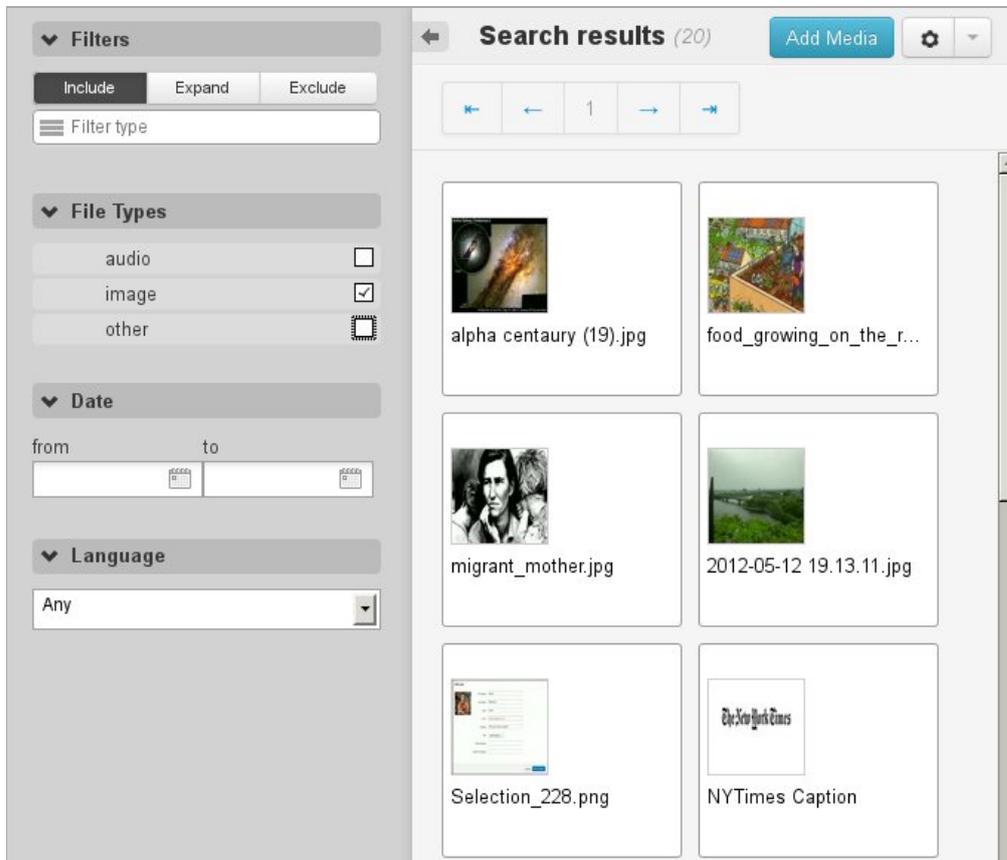
The screenshot shows a section titled 'Internal collaborators' with an 'Add new' button. Below is a table listing three collaborators.

Internal collaborators			 Add new
Andrew Reporter	Andrew Reporter	Collaborator	▼
Christine Journalist	Christine Journalist	Administrator	▼
Sarah Stringer	Sarah Stringer	Administrator	▼

Note that even if an individual has been set to have only collaborator-level privileges by the administrator in the Users section, she can nevertheless be granted administrator-level privileges when added as a contributor to a live blog. These privileges only extend to the particular live blog in question.

9. MEDIA ARCHIVE

The media archive is an emerging feature of Live Blog. You can upload media such as audio or images, and conduct various operations on the uploaded items, such as search, filtering, and editing of metadata. However, it cannot be used in production currently because the ability to place items from the media archive into the timeline of a live blog has not yet been enabled. Coming soon!



APPENDIX

I 0. GETTING HELP

I I. ABOUT THIS MANUAL

10. GETTING HELP

Live Blog is based on the Superdesk platform created by Sourcefabric. You can visit the Superdesk development forum, and sign up for the mailing list, at <http://forum.sourcefabric.org/categories/superdesk-dev>

This forum is mirrored by the mailing list, so posts on the forum appear on the mailing list and vice versa. You can therefore also post a message there by emailing superdesk-dev@lists.sourcefabric.org

To subscribe to forum updates via mail, please register or login to the forum by clicking the appropriate link. Then click the **Subscribe** button at the top of each forum page.

BUG REPORTING

Live Blog needs your input to improve. If you think you've found a bug, please visit <http://dev.sourcefabric.org/> and sign in, using the same login and password that you registered for the Superdesk forum. Create a bug report by selecting **Create Issue**, then **Superdesk**, and then **Bug** on the **Issues** menu in the main navigation bar. That way, the Superdesk team can keep track of your problem and notify you when it has been fixed. You can also suggest improvements and new features for Live Blog on that site.

CONTACT

Finally, when all other avenues have been exhausted, email us directly at contact@sourcefabric.org and we'll try to help!

II . ABOUT THIS MANUAL

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Version 3, 29 June 2007

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