

# Convergence in Web Coverage of the Election of a Pope

On a day when so many stories were breaking at once (10th anniversary of the Oklahoma City bombing, court hearing for suspect in 9/11 attacks), several news organization responded to the surprise EARLY announcement of the election of a new pope with multimedia coverage.

As examples of convergence on the web, CNN.com, Chicago Tribune.com, and "The New York Times On the Web" **brought still images, audio, video and text TOGETHER** to give the reader of this breaking story an extended view of what was happening.

Use this handout to see how each news organization took full advantage of the flexibility of the web as a news medium.

## **CNN.com**

Complementing its round-the-clock global coverage on the air, the CNN web site took the story in three chunks providing multimedia content on Pope Benedict XVI, the ongoing story of Catholic church, with its response to these developments and worldwide response. Several CNN video clips are included. Of course, CNN used the site to promote its on-air programming as well.

## **Chicago Tribune.com**

Even though it published a rare afternoon EXTRA (print edition) following the Vatican announcement, *The Chicago Tribune* presented the story in layers giving the reader access to the text of the pope's remarks along with a photo gallery and video clips of his official introduction

## **New York Times on the Web**

Along with two stories on the announcement, *The New York Times* provided a historical perspective on Pope Benedict XVI. They also took the images and text together in an interactive graphic – something that's only possible using the web.

## **DatelineAlabama.com**

Normally updated weekly, *Dateline Alabama*, as a student-produced news website, did a special update on April 19 to provide a young person's perspective on the announcement of the election of the new pope. Without the capabilities of a full-time in-house web staff, *Dateline Alabama* used hyperlinks to take readers to multimedia content elsewhere on the story.

## SO WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS?

- **Reporters** in the age of convergence have to be able to **respond quickly** (The vote on Pope Benedict XVI came earlier than expected)
- Reporters have to **think LATERALLY** (across multiple media) as they conceive ways to tell a major story
- **Visual journalists** are a **BIG PART** of the **BIG STORY**. All of these sites utilized the capacity of the web to give readers/viewers multiple images of this story.
- **Audio and video provide** an important complement to the text. Hearing the audio of the cheering crowd in St. Peter's Square was as important as seeing it in pictures. The clips were not long documentaries, but short clips to add **another DIMENSION to the story**.

As the self-proclaimed "worldwide leader in news," CNN.com rarely devotes its entire home page to one story. On April 19, 2005 it "broke format" and presented a graphics-intensive full-page that included audio slide shows, FLASH presentations, web polls and even special places for readers to get e-mail alerts JUST on this story. The videos were news pieces from CNN-TV.

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# FACE OF THE CHURCH

## THE 265th POPE

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger of Germany has been elected by the conclave of cardinals to succeed John Paul II. He chose the name Pope Benedict XVI.

- [Pope picked on second day of voting](#) | [Gallery](#)
- [Profile: Pope Benedict XVI](#) | [Remarks](#)
- [Audio Slide Show: Bells ring in announcement](#)
- [Video: White smoke rises over the Vatican](#)
- [Gallery: Papal election](#) | [Video: First blessing](#)
- [Cheers, jubilation in Ratzinger's hometown](#)
- [Special Report: Pope John Paul II, 1920-2005](#)



### GLOBAL REACH

With 1 billion members, the Roman Catholic Church is the largest Christian denomination, spanning six continents.



[View interactive map](#)

### On CNN TV

Tune into "[American Morning](#)," beginning at 7 a.m. ET, for reaction and insight on how Pope Benedict XVI will handle issues important to American Catholics.

## THE CHURCH

The Roman Catholic Church has changed considerably in recent years, its ranks swelling, particularly in Latin America and Africa.

- [Interactive map: The Catholic world](#)
- [Catholics react to papal announcement](#)
- [Flash interactive: Selecting a new leader](#)
- [Poll: U.S. Catholics support changes](#) | [Results](#)
- [Video: Issues facing the new pope](#)



### QuickVote

What is the greatest challenge facing Pope Benedict XVI?

- A diverse Catholic membership
- Pressing international issues
- Establishing his credibility

[VIEW RESULTS](#)

## THE WORLD

The pope is not only a significant religious figure, but a political one as well, capable of influencing world leaders and opinion.

- [New challenges await next pope](#)
- [Reaction: World leaders extend good wishes](#)
- [Video: Will the new pope be media-savvy?](#)
- [Feedback: Tell us what you think](#)

CNN.com users weigh in on key issues:

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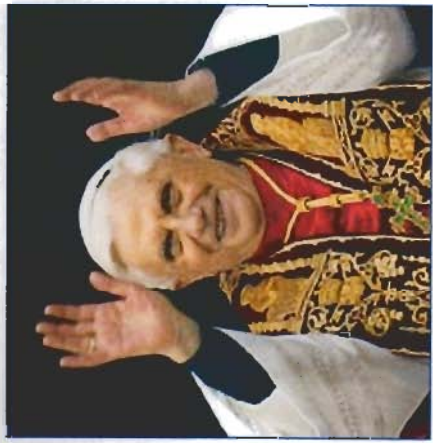
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Pope Benedict XVI addresses the crowd.  
**Next pope's challenge**  
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 • Text of new pope's remarks  
 • Thousands of gamblers score  
 • **Photos:** Ratzinger's past | **Election**  
 • **Video:** Introduction | **1st address**  
 • **Editorial:** Joy and burdens

**Flock welcomes pope**  
 The world's Roman Catholics today welcomed the successor to John Paul II with elation and reservation.  
 • **Madigan:** 'There is a sign'

Given its large Catholic readership in a city like Chicago, the Tribune's online coverage included more about the man selected. Readers were able to read the full text of Pope Benedict XVI's remarks as well as see the video clips of his introduction.

Because it published an afternoon EXTRA, the Tribune could "re-purpose" more of the content prepared for the special print edition for its online audience.

**John Paul II's journey**  
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# The New York Times

ON THE WEB

UPDATED TUESDAY, APRIL 19, 2005 9:22 PM ET | New York Clear 64°F



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## Cardinal Ratzinger of Germany Is Elected 265th Pope, Taking Benedict XVI as Name



Kai Pfaffenbach/Reuters

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger making his first appearance as Pope Benedict XVI.  
 • In His Words: [Video](#) | [Transcript](#)

### Cardinals Choose a Close Aide to John Paul II to Lead Church

By IAN FISHER and LAURIE GOODSTEIN 5:38 PM ET  
 Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, who served as John Paul II's hard-line defender of church doctrine, was elected on the second day of the conclave.

- [History: The Previous Pope Benedict](#)
- [Interactive Graphic](#) | [Complete Coverage](#)

### In St. Peter's Square, Optimism and Concern

By ELISABETH ROSENTHAL 5:49 PM ET  
 As the new pontiff emerged on the balcony, many cheered wildly while others were openly and greatly distressed.

- [Video: The Scene at the Vatican](#)

### WASHINGTON Senate Panel Postpones Vote on U.N. Nominee

### POPE BENEDICT XVI

▶ INTERACTIVE FEATURE



- The New Pope**  
 Ian Fisher reports on the Roman Catholic Church's next leader.
- [Photographs: A New Pope](#)
  - [Interactive: Inside the Conclave](#)
  - [Interactive: Life of John Paul II](#)
  - [Discuss the New Papacy](#)

So life like  
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### Movies

**New DVD's**  
 "Errol Flynn: The Signature Collection" brings together six films starring the cinema's

The time stamps on these two stories show how quickly reporters responded to the news. Elisabeth Rosenthal provided the "color" piece from the scene while Ian Fisher and Laurie Goodstein wrapped up the details on the team wrapped up the details on the announcement.

Meanwhile, the NYTimes web staff had already developed interactive features on the meeting to select the Pope (conclave) and simply added a photo gallery on breaking news & link to discussion boards.

### Readers' Opinions

[Forum: Mental Health](#)  
 Why do we continue to believe

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## Benedict Has Big Shoes to Fill

Regardless of style, Ratzinger should continue John Paul's connection to youth and world leaders.

**Dennis Pillion, staff reporter**

April 19, 2005

As the white smoke billowed from the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican on Tuesday, the College of Cardinals elected Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger of Germany as successor to rock star Pope John Paul II. Ratzinger will take the name Benedict XVI.

Prior to Ratzinger's election, speculation was rampant that the new pontiff would be a simple caretaker, someone to attend more to the needs of the Roman Catholic Church than John Paul II's radical global outreach.

Still, whether Benedict XVI turns out to be a world traveler like John Paul II or a caretaker of the Church, he'll have an enormous task in replacing John Paul to the world.

John Paul II's death was mourned by leaders from nations and religions worldwide. The man was credited with the fall of Communism, for crying out loud. You don't accomplish that by simply leading the Catholic people in the right direction.

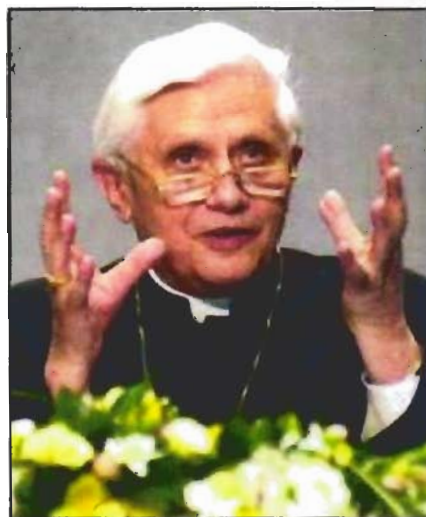
What John Paul had, and what his successor and other world leaders should take note of, was a tremendous love for all people, unwavering firmness in his beliefs and, most importantly, the wisdom to know that the two are not mutually exclusive.

In a world that operates on the presumptuousness of political correctness, John Paul was not afraid to reach out to the Fidel Castros of the world and give oppressed people hope.

There was never any duplicity in John Paul II's motives. Anyone can read a copy of the Catechism of the Catholic Church and know exactly what he stood for. And he wasn't afraid of stating his beliefs.

He disagreed with President George W. Bush on many issues, including the death penalty and the war in Iraq, and still Bush was among the high profile mourners of the pope.

John Paul II had this oft-ignored tenet of Christianity



Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger of Germany, who became the new Pope at the Vatican Tuesday April 19, 2005, is seen in this June 26, 2000 file photo. Ratzinger will be Pope Benedict XVI. AP Photo

[Click here to enlarge.](#)

### ARTICLE FEATURES

- e-mail this article
- print this article

### RELATED LINKS

- Global Catholic Network's Feature on Pope John Paul II
- Global Catholic Network's Feature on Pope Benedict XVI
- John Paul II Timeline
- CNN Special Report -- Face of the Church
- MSNBC -- Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger Elected Pope

### RELATED ARTICLES

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**Dateline Alabama is targeted toward a younger audience.** Rather than publishing the same stories about the new pope found on the other news websites, Dateline prepared a perspective on the announcement.

A former Dateline editor, the writer, Dennis Pillion, is Catholic. He didn't have to do as much research on deadline because of his on expertise on the subject.

Dateline also linked to multimedia elements on other news websites, such as those on the EWTN (Eternal Word TV Network), a Catholic cable channel.