

News You Can Choose

New technology is changing the way the news is delivered to you.

By Simone MacAndrew

A handful of daily newspapers, a talent for speed-reading and a good pair of scissors were once all that was needed to put together the DFAIT clippings package and keep colleagues informed of the latest headlines. The news went out early every morning in thick stacks of photocopied articles that landed in offices at dawn or piled up on fax machines, to be read over the morning coffee.

New technologies, blogs, news aggregators and citizen journalism are changing the face of the media. And they've changed the way DFAIT's media monitoring and analysis team gets the news out to viewers and readers in a timely, effective manner.

Paper clippings are a thing of the past. In an effort to improve news delivery and decrease paper use, in July 2008 the team switched to delivering its "clippings" packages electronically, in PDF format. In addition, it mines blogs, scans the foreign press, keeps the consular affairs staff informed 24-7, and manages DFAIT's NewsDesk site.

NewsDesk is a Government of Canada website that individual departments customize for their audiences. DFAIT's version can be found on the intranet (click the button in the upper right-hand corner of the home page). You can search NewsDesk, create your own account with individual preferences, and subscribe to receive important articles automatically by email. You can also find your local newspaper in Central NewsDesk, then browse through the whole paper or just your favourite section.

For those looking to keep current, our reports come in a variety of flavours:

FAIT IN THE NEWS is a daily report alerting staff to "Hot Issues" of importance to the department and likely to generate media and public interest. It includes summaries of news and commentary about foreign affairs and international trade, providing a strategic and insightful look at how the media perceives the top issues of the day.

"Media Monitoring always captures a broad range of relevant articles. Between these products and The Financial Post, all my bases are covered."

**—Stewart Beck,
ADM, International Business Development, Investment and Innovation**

"The new media-service products are timely, focused and succinct... My morning starts in bed with 'Hot Issues,' but there is plenty of stimulation thanks to BCM all through the day!"

**—Bill Crosbie,
ADM, Consular Services & Emergency Management**

CANADA IN THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA is a daily selection of articles about Canada that have appeared in English and French news media around the world.

INFOFLASH is an electronic news bulletin sent each day to missions, providing a quick overview of Canadian news on a range of issues.

THIS WEEK IN BLOGS samples blogs relevant to foreign affairs and international trade, presenting excerpts as well as links to dozens of them.

Find out more about the different products—which are available through NewsDesk, by subscription or by contacting BCM—by visiting NewsDesk.

Going paperless is fast, efficient and socially responsible: the switch to electronic clippings saves more than a hundred trees a year. Now go enjoy your fair-trade coffee while reading the latest headlines online!

Simone MacAndrew is deputy director of the Media Monitoring and Analysis Office (BCM).



photo: Mike Pinder for DFAIT

Simone MacAndrew: Going paperless has many benefits.