

1) Problem Statement/Research Question (What problem or research question is your concept trying to address? )

The newspaper has been around for so long that its categories and text-based format have become “the way things are.” But in reality the categories aren’t so intuitive for seeing the larger visual picture of what’s been happening to the world. Some issues, for example, are easily neglected when the next “in” topic comes by. Text-based models in general suffer from this fault, and many others. How much text can you fit on a screen without overwhelming a user? How much should you assume a reader knows about what has been happening before now? This application is meant to bridge those gaps by using visualization in place of text.

2) Concept (What experience, tool, or artifact are you trying to create? How will your concept address the problem or research question introduced in #1?)

We’ll take years-worth of news data and display it as points on a world map, with heat maps and line connections between countries to show country relations and popular world issues over time. Each news item marker could get its own blurb headline with links to news articles for more information.

The application will also include filters such as news sources (because which source isn’t biased?), news categories (if you are more interested in economics or scientific advances), and time periods (so you can track patterns over time).

3) Persona/Audience (Who is your target audience(s)?)

People interested in international relations could make use of the country connections and heat map of news over time. People who don’t like reading news as text but want to get up to date on modern world history could use it as a visual tool for learning. People involved in non-profits could use it to identify issues that are still ongoing but passed over in the wake of more popular news, such as in small third-world countries that don’t have much attention.

4) Journey Map (What are the stages of interaction a person must go through in order to use your concept? (Produce a diagram or flow chart. Wireframes would also be nice, but are not required.))

[image of world map with markers and connections or heat map overlay]

[click marker -> headlines and links]

[click country -> zoom in on country?]

[other features:

zoom feature on right side

option to turn off/on heatmap

slider for year

radio buttons for category]

5) Institutional/Scholarly Need (If you are working with one of the museums, how does your concept fit with the needs of that institution? If you are working with CFRP data or other humanities project data, what value does your concept add to performing research in your partner archive?)

Gives a new mode of visualization for the data to provide a different look/insight on the information, in the context of international relations and issues.

Ties in with civic media work like in MIT's Center for Civic Media, like CLIFF, their geoparser for news articles, or like MediaCloud, an attempt to analyze massive amounts of news data regarding a certain topic.

6) Field Overview (What are three examples of precedents that inform your idea?)

Moby dick map and the interactive enlightenment correspondence map.  
CLIFF by MIT's Center for Civic Media (geoparser for news)

7) Enabling Technologies (What are some potential technologies you might use to implement your project?)

Map APIs such as Google Maps, tools to extract data like locations from news articles (e.g. Stanford's tool or CLIFF by MIT's Center for Civic Media)

8) Timeline (Produce a week-by-week timeline that lays out how you will bring your project to completion. You should also be clear about the division of labor by pointing out which team members will be completing each task)

(by deadline)

Apr 15: world map with markers for news articles

Meghana - Write code to take news data and put it on a map with annotated headlines

Karleigh - Collect a sample of news articles having to do with various countries

Apr 22: connections between markers, UI for options

Meghana - Write code to draw lines between news dealing with multiple locations

Karleigh - UI mockup designs

Apr 29: implement filter options, prototype draft due

Meghana - Write code to make heatmap and filtered news work

Karleigh - Collection of info/mockups/documentation for prototype draft

May 6: final paper draft due, prototype presentation draft

Meghana - Final edits to the code and interface

Karleigh - Final edits and updates to paper/ help designing the presentation

May 13: prototype with presentation due, design document due

MIT OpenCourseWare  
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

CMS.633 / CMS.833 Digital Humanities  
Spring 2015

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.