

The Cambodia Daily's Digital Strategy

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Notes

Some of the 30-day period analytics discussed in this report include breaking news. The difference in pageviews and users between a 30-day period with breaking news versus one without averages about 75,000 and 5,000, respectively. Periods with breaking news carry a **B** in the footnote.

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All experiments discussed in this report were carried out by the author.

Background

The Cambodia Daily (The Daily), published six days a week, Monday to Saturday, has used WordPress as its content management system (CMS) since October 2012, when the newspaper first launched its website. The website launched using a slightly modified WordPress theme.¹ As an editorial directive, guided mostly by uncertainty after being print-only for 20 years, only select stories from the day's newspaper were posted, starting at 9:30 a.m. These stories kept the same headlines; there was no social media; no breaking news; no same-day content; very little multimedia (only pictures). Launch day drew about 4,000 people.² The site steadily grew its audience by the thousands over the next few days, a lot credited to hype.

Then, on October 15, 2012, Cambodia's king-father, Norodom Sihanouk, died. The decision was made to post a story the same day. It drew pageviews of about 40,000.³ But following this day, the directive of selective stories remained. The audience continued to grow over six months, however, and there became a demand. Mobile readership increased to take about one-third of all readership and the editors as well as the publisher's office agreed to launch a mobile edition.

In the months that followed in 2013, the increased readership, demand and competition resulted in a change in the editorial directive: All news stories could go online and a social media campaign (Twitter and Facebook) could begin to promote those stories. Posting time was moved to 9 a.m., and only very big breaking news stories could be posted on the same day. Social media, however, would not be present on the website itself, and the content would be placed behind a paywall. A Khmer-language edition also was launched

¹ See Appendix A

² Google Analytics. October 2, 2012. Accessed November 15, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

³ Google Analytics. Accessed November 15, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

online. This directive continued for months, with tweaks to the website's design to make it clean and attractive to readers.

Then, in September 2013, a new strategy was implemented to begin a mobile-first, responsive redesign of the website in order to accommodate burgeoning mobile readers.^{4 5} The redesign would include social media and multimedia slots, however, they would not be a priority. The redesign launched in February 2014 and pageviews as well as users in the months that followed grew by 100,000+ and 2,000+, respectively.⁶ Paid subscribers also increased, and more breaking news stories were published. At one point, monthly views topped about 800,000.⁷

In September/October 2014, the editorial directive was renegotiated with more input from the digital team and it was decided to redesign and update the website with priority on engaging readers.⁸ This included a change in social media strategy; more same-day and multimedia content, including breaking news; posting times and the redesign; a new platform (newsletter); and search engine optimization.

The result has been a slow, but noticeable increase in both monthly users and pageviews. The average time spent on The Daily's website remains at 2.3 minutes with an average bounce rate of 53 percent, and returning visitors at 56 percent.⁹

Social Media Strategy

A prior directive was to tweet only the headlines of stories and the links to them. Same with Facebook posts. There were no share options on the website. The tweets received, on

⁴ Joshua Wilwohl. The Cambodia Daily: Print to Digital. April 2014. Digital News Design conference. Singapore, Singapore. www.wilwohl.com/thedaily.

⁵ See Appendix B

⁶ Google Analytics. Accessed November 15, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

⁷ **B** Google Analytics. May 1, 2014, to May 31, 2014. Accessed November 15, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

⁸ See Appendix C

⁹ **B** Google Analytics. January 1, 2014, to November 16, 2014. Accessed November 25, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

average, one to two retweets, and one favorite.¹⁰ Facebook analytics show each post shared on The Cambodia Daily's page received about 400 to 850 views, 15 likes and two shares.¹¹ Social is the third-largest driver of traffic to The Daily's website, but also has the highest bounce rate.

With the February 2014 redesign, share buttons were added at the bottom of articles, and with an October 2014 update, they were moved to be more prominently displayed on article pages.¹² ¹³ On September 25, 2014, it was decided to end tweets and Facebook posts with only headlines and begin more engaging tweets and posts.¹⁴ Tweets would contain quotes from sources in articles; pictures or videos with tweets; short blurbs about the article; stand-out facts within the article; numerals; hashtags; and callouts. It also was decided to space out tweets by 30 minutes to one hour from about every 15 to 75 minutes. It also was decided to continue not to break news on Twitter unless there was an article to go with the tweet. Facebook posts would include blurbs about the article, with quotes, important facts and/or pictures and videos. The same breaking news strategy for Twitter was carried over to Facebook. Also, when possible, tweets and posts would be kept below 100 characters and a colon was added before a link for clarity.

During the 30-day period between September 25, 2014, and October 24, 2014, tweets received about twice as many retweets and favorites than before.¹⁵ Looking at monthly data from October 2014, there were 137 tweets; 382 retweets, which had a reach of 211,100; 378 mentions, which had a reach of 763,500; 19 replies and 147 favorites.¹⁶ Compared to the first

¹⁰ Found analyzing Twitter stream of The Cambodia Daily. November 15, 2014, to November 16, 2014.

¹¹ Found analyzing Facebook administrative panel for The Cambodia Daily Facebook page. November 15, 2014, to November 16, 2014.

¹² Joshua Wilwohl. Cambodia Daily Web Design Update. October 9, 2014. <http://wilwohl.com/hypertext/cambodia-daily-web-design-update/>.

¹³ See Appendix D

¹⁴ See Appendix E

¹⁵ Found analyzing the Twitter stream of The Cambodia Daily. November 15, 2014, to November 16, 2014.

¹⁶ Cambodia Daily. SumAll. October 1, 2014, to November 1, 2014. www.sumall.com/now.

month that data was collected, June 2014, some numbers were higher: 141 tweets; 196 retweets, which had a reach of 123,000; 422 mentions, which had a reach of 507,400; 15 replies and 65 favorites.¹⁷ The averages for each between June 2014 and September 2014 (a total of three months) are: 519 tweets; 938 retweets, with a reach of 882,300; 1,700 mentions, with a reach of 2.32 million; 63 replies and 347 favorites.¹⁸

Following the September 2014 changes, the most engaging tweets, excluding breaking news, which carries BREAKING before a tweet, appeared to be ones that contained quotes from a source in the article or callouts. Multimedia tweets appeared second, followed by ones that contained a short description of the story. Some articles were tweeted twice for experimentation purposes, each using a different method, such as without a picture versus with a picture and only the headline versus a quote within the story. In both those instances, the latter tweets were more popular. Also, for the first time, readers began to tweet back to The Daily often, adding their own commentary about the story to the original tweet. Twitter's usage in Cambodia is small compared to other countries, but Twitter is—on average—the fourth-largest driver of traffic to The Daily's website, accounting for 3.38 percent of total traffic.

¹⁹

For Facebook, over the same 30-day period, September 25, 2014, to October 24, 2014, posts received only a couple hundred more views (likely the result of Facebook algorithms), but some posts did receive more shares and likes, averaging about 10 to 15 more each.²⁰ The total number of sessions referred from Facebook during the same 30-day

¹⁷ Cambodia Daily. SumAll. June 1, 2014, to July 1, 2014. www.sumall.com/now.

¹⁸ Cambodia Daily. SumAll. June 1, 2014, to September 1, 2014. www.sumall.com/now.

¹⁹ Google Analytics. January 1, 2014, to November 16, 2014. Accessed November 17, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

²⁰ Found analyzing Facebook administrative panel for The Cambodia Daily Facebook page. November 15, 2014, to November 16, 2014.

period was 19,235.²¹ It was the largest number of sessions referred from Facebook since May 2014.²² For example, compared to the previous 30-day period, from August 25, 2014, to September 24, 2014, the number of sessions increased by 3,848.²³ Facebook is very popular among Cambodians, but most appear to look for news on Facebook in their native language.²⁴ The Daily's Khmer-language edition online helps with this and some users who click on the Khmer version of the article link through to the English version. Facebook, including mobile and link shim, is—on average—the third-largest driver of traffic to The Daily, accounting for 9.27 percent of total traffic.²⁵

Based off of these results, it appears the new social media strategy is working, though it may be too early to tell. There also remains challenges: brevity is difficult (sacrificing clarity); importance versus timing (what articles are tweeted/posted first and how often); and breaking news (waiting for a published story versus tweeting/posting without a story). These three remain a continued debate in the newsroom. In one instance, the lack of attribution to a headline that was cut to fit Twitter's 140 character count resulted in a retraction of that tweet despite the fact that when the tweet was opened, the headline with attribution as well as readout was displayed. Another debate is the use of shortened words, such as btwn (between), w/ (with) and b/c (because), and use of punctuation, particularly when English is not the first language for some of The Daily's readers. Timing does not become too much of a debate, as tweets and posts follow the flow of the newspaper: Front-page, top story tweeted

²¹ Google Analytics. September 25, 2014, to October 24, 2014. Accessed November 17, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

²² Google Analytics. May 25, 2014, to September 24, 2014. Accessed November 17, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

²³ Google Analytics. August 25, 2014, to September 24, 2014. Accessed November 17, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

²⁴ Joshua Wilwohl. Demand for Khmer Script Increases With Social Networks. The Cambodia Daily. November 15, 2014. <http://www.cambodiadaily.com/news/demand-for-khmer-script-increases-with-social-networks-72405/>.

²⁵ Google Analytics. January 1, 2014, to November 16, 2014. Accessed November 17, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

first, followed by a below-the-fold story, then the first national story and so on. But, for example, when analytics display a last-page national article performing better than a front-page national article, debate ensues on how important it is to tweet or post that story before others.

Breaking news via tweets and posts remains the most debated topic. The debate is: When tweeting or posting on Facebook breaking news before an article is published on The Daily's website, (1) traffic is not directed back to The Daily and (2) competing news agencies may receive word of the news item and know an article is imminent. While these concerns are well established, being first in the era of digital (no matter what the platform) must be considered, particularly when competitors live tweet or live post on Facebook breaking news items before a complete story is published. Experiments must be conducted to see if it in fact would detract readers from clicking on a second tweet or post that has a link to a story.

Same-Day and Multimedia Content

During the same month of switching the social media strategy, The Daily also began to produce more same-day news content, such as breaking news, and multimedia. The Daily's website is mostly the day's newspaper articles online. There is little difference between the two products. This is slowly changing as there becomes more demand from readers for more content online, particularly multimedia.

On June 4, 2014, The Daily introduced Daily Notes, a section dedicated to brief (75 to 150 words) stories about news items happening in real-time. Each post attracted about 500 to 800 pageviews.²⁶ But after about three months, Daily Notes was abandoned because of (1) staffing and (2) the difficulty in determining what news items should fall under this category: Is it good enough for the newspaper? Will it result in losing print readers? Too much time

²⁶ Google Analytics. June 4, 2014, to September 15, 2014. Accessed November 15, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

became wasted as a result of (2) that Daily Notes stories became infrequent. As a result, it was decided to end the section with the October design update and focus on stories for the next day's newspaper and breaking news.

Breaking news is now published within an hour (sometimes 30 minutes) of hearing about a news event. Breaking news at first streamed across a bar positioned below the banner on the homepage, but October's design update moved breaking news to become a fixed, transparent div that stays at the top of a reader's screen as he or she scrolls.²⁷ It stays in this spot for between two to three hours before it is moved to the day's top spot. This change has seen a slight increase of about 1 percent in clicks to breaking news stories from the homepage. Site traffic spikes by about double once these articles are posted, usually between 12,000 and 30,000 pageviews in a 24-hour period.^{28 29}

The most recent experiment with same-day content by The Daily, conducted on November 18, 2014, was labeling a news item as "latest" instead of breaking. This was done because the news item occurred in the early hours of the morning and was not posted until hours later. The article stayed fixed below the header but above the day's main content for most of the day.³⁰ The news item was a fire in Siem Reap City that killed five people, including an Australian national, and injured two more.³¹ Though this was done only once, there was no difference in pageviews or users compared to an article labeled as breaking.³² This calls into question whether labels other than breaking and update to breaking are necessary, as most users appear to find the articles anyway.

²⁷ See Appendix F

²⁸ Monitored from May 2014 to August 2014. Google Analytics. Accessed November 15, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

²⁹ See Appendix G

³⁰ See Appendix H

³¹ Saing Soenthrith. Five Killed in Fire at Siem Reap Nightclub. The Cambodia Daily. November 18, 2014. www.cambodiadaily.com/news/five-killed-in-siem-reap-nightclub-fire-72551.

³² Google Analytics. November 18, 2014. Accessed November 19, 2014. www.google.com/analytics. Pageviews reached 17,368. Users reached 9,095. / See Appendix I

In another experiment, conducted between November 5, 2014, and November 7, 2014, The Daily created an interactive, multimedia map for Cambodia's Water Festival.³³ The map was the first interactive, real-time feature on The Daily's website. It was updated live by a reporter from his smartphone as he walked around the festival for three days. The map showed what streets were open and closed; where motorists were detoured; where motorists could park; and points of interest (attractions). It also included pictures and videos of some of the mapped points. The feature was well received and promoted, receiving 607 total pageviews, and it ranked as the website's seventh most-viewed page during the three days.³⁴ Better placement of the map on the homepage as well as better planning in general of the feature could have helped increase its popularity.

In another experiment, The Daily introduced a special online feature that was designed as a separate page.³⁵ The feature was a short story about Cambodia written by Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor and novelist Alan Lightman and illustrated by a local artist. Instead of placing this story within The Daily's usual online article format, it was broken out, split into sections and promoted on the homepage. The feature stripped away everything on the page but the text, included a large headline, a fixed navigation and split the sections with the illustrations to create an e-book-like format. It was launched November 3, 2014. Between that date and November 16, 2014, the feature received 510 pageviews, and the average time spent on the page was 3 minutes and 44 seconds.³⁶ Similar projects in the future could be better planned and advertised to increase popularity. For example, one idea was to animate the illustrations, but time restraints made this not possible.

³³ Joshua Wilwohl and Khuon Narim. Interactive Water Festival Map. The Cambodia Daily. November 5, 2014 to November 7, 2014. www.cambodiadaily.com/waterfestivalmap.

³⁴ Google Analytics. Accessed November 17, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

³⁵ Reprisals. A short story by Alan Lightman. Web design and programming by Joshua Wilwohl. November 3, 2014. www.cambodiadaily.com/repirsals.

³⁶ Google Analytics. Accessed November 17, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

Multimedia (mostly video), introduced on October 27, 2014, remains a challenge. The Daily uses YouTube to host its video and embeds them on The Daily's article pages and homepage using modified CSS to strip videos of YouTube's branding and make them responsive. Videos embedded only on article pages receive hardly any views. The Daily's first video, Villagers Losing Land March to PM's House, received 35 views on its first day. As of November 15, 2014, it received 72 views. Since the first video, four of the five other videos produced received similar results. One video, Phnom Penh's Beloved Water Festival Returns, received 150 views on the first day, November 6, 2014, and 193 views on the second, November 7, 2014. As of November 15, 2014, it received 553 views.³⁷ This video's higher views can be credited to the fact that it was embedded on The Daily's homepage on November 6, 2014, and into November 7, 2014, and could be viewed from the homepage without clicking into an article. One of the main challenges with video in Cambodia is Internet speed. At times, it is not fast enough to load video and most users quit or drop off quickly when watching video.

Posting Times and Redesign

One of the biggest challenges for The Daily's website had been (and still is) the time to begin posting stories from the day's newspaper. When the website first launched, posting times were random. Stories were selected by editors in the morning and then those stories were posted over a three- to four-hour period, beginning at 9:30 a.m. Peak reading times were between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. and again between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.³⁸ This schedule primarily was fueled by the fear of losing print readers and, therefore, advertisers, as the print edition of The Daily is the main source of revenue. But this schedule—at first—seemed OK.

³⁷ Google Analytics. Accessed November 15, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

³⁸ Google Analytics. October 2012 to March 2013. Accessed November 15, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

Readers remained steady for about three months, averaging about 100,000 pageviews per 30-day period, minus the rare breaking news stories at the time.

By December 2012/January 2013, The Daily began to explore the option of a paywall and by March 2013, a hard paywall was put in place. Readers then began questioning why every news story was not published online, and following demand, by June 2013, The Daily started posting all stories (except for briefs) to the website, but continued to stagger the posts, starting this time at 9 a.m., with a hard paywall in place. The paywall offered readers only the first paragraph of a story. Backlash soon ensued about the paywall and, by July 2013, a metered paywall of 10 free articles per month was put in place and all stories (including briefs) were posted at 9 a.m. The result was obvious, and pageviews increased by about 100,000 per 30-day period.³⁹

A local-language, Khmer, edition online was launched at this time. It followed the same article posting schedule, and clickthroughs to the English version were noticeable. Pageviews increased by about 125,000, and pageviews for the 60-day period between August 1, 2013, and September 30, 2013, reached 1.046 million.⁴⁰ This schedule of posting at 9 a.m. continued, and every 30-day period thereafter until February 2014, pageviews averaged 450,000.⁴¹ Users hovered above 100,000 per 30-day period.⁴² Peak times changed to only between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.⁴³

In February 2014, following a mobile-first, responsive redesign to accommodate the large increase of mobile readers (at times this segment was about half of all readership), it was decided to begin posting all stories by 9 a.m. The redesign included a JavaScript paywall

³⁹ Google Analytics. Accessed November 15, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

⁴⁰ **B** Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

that prevented users from viewing any part of an article after their 10 free views were up. The following 60-day period between March 1, 2014, and April 30, 2014, received 1.3 million pageviews.⁴⁴ Every 30-day period following up until August 1, 2014, pageviews averaged 450,000-plus.⁴⁵ Users hovered above 100,000 per 30-day period.⁴⁶

[REDACTED]

On October 9, 2014, The Daily rolled out its first website update since the February redesign. It included more articles on the homepage with more slots for multimedia. At this time, it also was decided to begin updating the website at 6:30 a.m. This was decided for two reasons: (1) reach more readers in the country and overseas; and (2) make sure the morning newsletter and social media are sent early and updated. Pageviews and users began to increase again for the first time since August 2014, when they fell below 400,000 and 100,000, respectively.⁴⁹ From October 9, 2014, to November 8, 2014, pageviews increased by about 20,000, to about 400,000, over the September 9, 2014, to October 8, 2014, period, and

⁴⁴ B Google Analytics. Accessed November 15, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

⁴⁵ B Ibid.

⁴⁶ B Google Analytics. Accessed November 15, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸

⁴⁹ Google Analytics. Accessed November 16, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

users increased by 11,000, to about 109,000.⁵⁰ It should be noted that the number of users was about the same to the number of users every 30-day period between May 2014 and July 2014, when pageviews reached between 600,000 and 800,000.⁵¹ This suggests some users were not returning as frequently as they once did and/or were not viewing as many articles as they once did. Peak reading times also changed to reflect the early update: 8 a.m. to 11 a.m., adding an extra hour on the previous period.⁵² This extra hour likely accounted for the additional pageviews and users.

The challenge now is to make sure this increase continues, and this could mean an even earlier posting time. It also means increasing engagement, as it appears users are becoming less engaged with the website and leaving faster than expected. While this is done with design and programming tweaks, such as adding related stories at the end of articles, more must be done. This could include a comments section; live chats with editors and/or reporters; live coverage of news events; better public outreach, such as polls, or input via social networks⁵³; and user-generated content. Also, using The Daily's print product to highlight its digital product, such as offering teasers in print to website content, could help.

The Newsletter

On September 29, 2014, The Daily introduced a newsletter, The Cambodia Daily Morning Report, delivered via email at 8 a.m. Monday to Saturday. Since then, it has become popular, with a current subscriber list of about 500, and averaging three to five more signups daily.⁵⁴ It offers linked headlines and the first paragraph of stories. There is only one photograph at the center of the newsletter with a readout and link to the story. Analytics

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ **B** Google Analytics. Accessed November 16, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

⁵² Google Analytics. Accessed November 16, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

⁵³ Betsy Cameron and Vadim Lavrusik. Analysis: How News Pages Are Keeping Readers Engaged. Facebook. July 21, 2011. www.facebook.com/notes/facebook-journalists/analysis-how-news-pages-are-keeping-readers-engaged/249876705024351.

⁵⁴ MailChimp. Accessed November 16, 2014. www.mailchimp.com.

provided by the newsletter's service, MailChimp, show opens and clicks above the industry's average. Opens at times reach as much as 72.5 percent, but average 45.5 percent, while clicks reach as much as 25 percent, but average 12.4 percent.⁵⁵ The industry (media and publishing) average for opens is 16.7 percent, while clicks is 3 percent.⁵⁶ The Daily's analytics show email is an increasing driver of traffic, but still remains small compared to direct traffic and social media. Between September 29, 2014, and November 15, 2014, email was the sixth-largest driver of traffic to the website.⁵⁷ It remained in the same spot that it did in early 2014, but the number of users from email increased. As mentioned earlier, the newsletter likely helped contribute to the increase in pageviews and users from October 9, 2014, to November 8, 2014.

The current debate is whether 8 a.m. is too late for the newsletter. Some news organizations release their morning report as early as 6 a.m.⁵⁸ Cambodians—and some expatriates, such as teachers and NGO workers—tend to wake up very early and an earlier send time could result in increased users, pageviews and newsletter subscribers. This also could assist with an increase in overseas traffic, as it would be early evening on the East Coast of the U.S. (the second-largest country by readership behind Cambodia) and mid-afternoon on the West Coast. For most countries in Europe, which rank much lower on the readership list, the times are either late night or early morning, which is unlikely to lead to additional readers.

⁵⁵ MailChimp. Accessed November 16, 2014. www.mailchimp.com.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Google Analytics. Accessed November 16, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

⁵⁸ Your Wednesday Briefing. The New York Times. Adeel Hassan and Victoria Shannon. April 23, 2014. www.nytimes.com/2014/04/23/us/your-wednesday-briefing.html?_r=0.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

The Daily rarely uses additional search engine optimization with its content other than the SEO options already provided by WordPress. The number one overall driver of traffic to The Daily is organic search. It accounts for 49 percent of all traffic.⁵⁹ Google is number one, totalling 93.92 percent of search traffic, followed by Yahoo!, 2.85 percent, and Bing, 2.27 percent.⁶⁰ When necessary as well as for experimentation, The Daily does add additional SEO data to its homepage, sections and articles. For example, with The Daily's redesign in February 2014, metadata descriptions were added to the index.php (homepage) and categories.php (sections) to help improve search results. Each single.php (individual article page) includes metadata for Google, Facebook and Twitter.

These changes could have assisted in the increase in readership following the February 2014 redesign until August 2014. It should also be noted that The Daily is filtered through Google News with subscription in parentheses beside each headline. With more prominent stories, headlines at times are changed to include Cambodia in them for searchability, though it does not appear to have a large influence. Based off of analytics, between February 1, 2014, and October 14, 2014, only about 15 articles with Cambodia in the headline were among the top 100 most-read articles.⁶¹

Summary

The Daily's current online strategy is preparing the newspaper for at least the next three years as Cambodia undergoes a shift in the media industry first experienced by the Western world and advanced economies more than four years ago. Print remains strong in Cambodia, particularly outside of the country's urban areas, but it is being challenged with

⁵⁹ Google Analytics. Accessed November 16, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

⁶⁰ Google Analytics. July, 25, 2013, to November, 15, 2014. Accessed November 16, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

⁶¹ Google Analytics. Accessed November 16, 2014. www.google.com/analytics.

digital products. The country practically skipped the computer generation and went straight to mobiles, laying the foundation for a disruption. Every six months, more Cambodians are going online, signing up for social networks, playing games, buying digital products and looking for news. The experiments conducted by The Daily over the past year, and in particular, the past three months, shows the newspaper is staying ahead when it comes to digital. But more experimentation must be done with a focus on finding ways to increase and engage readers, which in turn would help generate revenue.

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Appendix A

Tuesday, April 22, 2014 Search in site...

The **CAMBODIA DAILY**
All the News Without Fear or Favor

HOME NEWS BUSINESS SELECTED FEATURES OPINION ABOUT US

LATEST

Mass Eviction Looms Ahead Of East Asia Summit


Sonando Verdict Tests KR Tribunal's Legacy

Cambodian Activist Monk Receives Swiss Human Rights Award

Reporting on Sonando Case Shows Differences in Local Media

Donors Criticize Sonando Sentence

Sonando Verdict Tests KR Tribunal's Legacy



Message From The Publisher

The Cambodia Daily is an independent non-profit newspaper published six days a week in Phnom Penh. It was established to provide a foundation for a free press in Cambodia and to train a new generation of journalists.

Its founder and publisher is a veteran American journalist who covered Cambodia in the 1960s for Newsweek and saw an opportunity to help the fledgling democracy by launching a newspaper here after the U.N.-supervised elections of 1993.

Continued

When the international community hammered out a hard-fought deal with the government in 2001 for a war crimes tribunal to try the most senior leaders of the Khmer Rouge regime, they hoped their efforts would also set an example for a local court system riddled with corruption and political influence.

October 4, 2012 · [Read More](#)

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The Burma Daily

Outreach


◀ ▶




'Our City' Turns Focus on Phnom



Eat Up, Amigos



Spirit of the Forest



Newspaper Man Goes to the Lake

Appendix C



The CAMBODIA DAILY

All the News Without Fear or Favor • The Daily Newspaper of Record Since 1993

From Cambodia to USA only USD 632++ till 15 Dec 2014
Los Angeles • San Francisco • Seattle • Honolulu

Labor Committee Decides on \$123 Minimum Wage

Labor Minister Kh Sam Hong said Wednesday morning that he will recommend \$123 as the new minimum wage in the garment sector, set to take effect in January, and that the government will make a final decision on the wage revision later in the day.

Two Monks Arrested for Transporting Flags to Pagoda

Police in Phnom Penh arrested two monks Wednesday morning who were allegedly transporting two bags filled with bamboo poles on their way to the city's eastern Samsaki Rongsey pagoda.



Bed Stunt Gets Boeng Kak Women a Year in Jail

The Phnom Penh Municipal Court on Tuesday sentenced Tip Vanny and six fellow activists to a year in prison, moments after convicting them of obstructing traffic for placing a bed in the middle of Monivong Boulevard on Monday to protest the flooding of their neighborhood.

Police Official Arrested Over Kompong Chhn Buffle-Elopua

Police Chief Court Pim Village Representative on Bule

Police Hunt Man Who Murdered Wife With Ax

ISIS IN CAMBODIA

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Reprisals A short story by ALAN LIGHTMAN

Yet Another CNRP Official Arrested Over July Violence

A prominent opposition CNRP official with an outstanding court warrant for his alleged role in a July 15 clash at Freedom Park was arrested and sent to prison Tuesday.

Assembly Spokesman Says Gov't May Consider Negotiation Law

National Assembly spokesman Chhivong Vonn said Tuesday that the government could consider creating specific laws prohibiting repression in the public sector if anyone is able to show that similar laws exist in another country.

Court Sentences Six, Five in Absentia, for Journalist's Murder

The Kompong Chhnang Provincial Court on Tuesday sentenced six men—five in absentia—to 12 years in prison for the January murder of a journalist in the province, according to the judge.

Protesters March for Removal of Village Chief

About 100 protesters on Tuesday marched to their local commune office on the outskirts of Paper City to submit a petition demanding the removal of their village chief, whose three sons they accuse of using violence with impunity.

Top Paddlers Compete for National Team Spots

About 300 of the country's strongest paddlers gathered in Takhmao City in Kampong province Tuesday to vie for a spot on the national team that will compete at the 30th SEA Games in Singapore in June.

As Deadline Passes, No Evictions at Waterfall

Authorities in Sihanoukville on Tuesday let pass a deadline they had set for a group of families to vacate their land but they are living on but warned them to leave voluntarily or face a forced eviction.

Deputies Meet Over New Civil Servant Pay Doses

Find Workers at Grand Trunk Allowed to Return

Cambodian Athletes to Compete in Asian Beach Games in Phuket

New Lays Company Enters a Shrimp Industry

IGA Reports Loans Due to Nagaford Site

Cambodian Rubber Prices Rise After Floor Price Agreed

Monarch Wears a Hollow Crown in a Katharsis

World Teachers' Day Prompts Reflection on Teacher Quality

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Pinom Penh's Beloved Water Festival Returns

Thousands of Cambodians resumed a centuries-old tradition Wednesday, streaming into the capital to party and watch boat races for the first time since 333 revelers were killed in a panic-induced stampede at the end of the festival in 2010.

A Lame, Defiant Victim Seeks His Day in Court

For two days last week, Freedom Park was occupied by a single man standing, still limping on crutches, silently protesting the dominant tragedy of his life in the only way he could think of to make himself heard.

Cherry Strives to Keep Festival Traditions Alive

As thousands of people descended on Phnom Penh for the return of the Water Festival this week, about 300 villagers in Kompong Speu stayed closer to home to celebrate two Buddhist rituals on Thursday night.

Appendix D

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Garment Sector Wage Hike a Boon for Landlords

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BY SEK ODOM, MATT BLOMBERG AND ZSOMBOR PETER | NOVEMBER 19, 2014

The Labor Ministry on Tuesday appealed to landlords whose tenants work in garment factories to refrain from raising rental prices in response to the sector's newly announced minimum wage, but it seems proprietors have already decided otherwise.

Starting in January, the monthly minimum wage in the country's garment sector will jump from \$100 to \$128 following a government decision last week.

"We did suggest and make an appeal to landlords...to please not increase the price," Labor Ministry spokesman Heng Suor said.

But he said the government had no plan to approach landlords with this message, and would not impose any kind of regulation on apartment owners.

"At the moment, we follow the free market economy," Mr. Suor said, suggesting that public housing around factory-heavy areas could eventually help ensure that housing costs do not rise with salaries.

"We will find some way to make housing more affordable for workers," he said, declining to elaborate further.

With more than 600,000 people estimated to be employed in garment- or footwear-producing factories nationwide, millions of additional dollars will end up in the pockets of the mostly young, female workers.

And their landlords, who rent out small concrete rooms to groups of tenants from out of town, are lining up to take their share.

Along Veng Steng Street, home to one of the country's densest concentrations of garment producers, factory staff, who typically pay between \$25 and \$40 a month per room, told of impending increases.

Landlords, too, said that prices would rise.

"All the businesses around here are ready to raise the rental price," said Im Vathana, 40, who owns a building with about 20 women living in seven rooms that go for \$35 to \$40 a month.

"But I will not raise my price because I am not a business, I only help the workers."

Seng Sopheak, 44, who has upward of 150 factory workers living in his 36 rooms, had similar sentiments.

"Every landlord around here will raise their prices," Mr. Sopheak said. "But I will not follow because the extra money should be for the workers to keep as savings."

About a dozen landlords interviewed Tuesday said the same thing: That every proprietor aside from themselves would hike rents.

But among those who pay to stay in the small homes that fill the streets and alleyways running off the industrial thoroughfare, the conclusion that a rent hike is coming was unanimous.

"When he heard about \$128, my owner told me that my rent will go up by \$5, but he didn't say when," said Chan Sam Ath, a 21-year-old seamstress from Svay Rieng province who pays \$20 for her one-room quarters in the industrial zone.

Pheng Mey Mey, a 30-year-old head of a team of seamstresses who takes home up to \$250 on a good month, said that she had also heard that her rent would increase.

"My supervisor told me that the owner will raise prices by \$5 in January," she said. "He knows because he meets with the landlords to talk about these things."

Women with experience in the industry said landlords have never missed an opportunity to increase their economic intake following a wage revision—the latest increase is the second since May 2013, when it was raised from \$61 to \$80.

Loem Lyheng, 27, who has worked in the garment industry for eight years and now earns between \$170 and \$190 a month, including overtime and allowances, said the rise is a foregone conclusion.

She explained that since 2006, when she was paying \$18 in rent while taking home about \$80 a month, every pay rise has been met with higher housing costs.

"They raised it after they killed the five," she said, referring to five garment workers shot dead by military police while protesting for better wages in January, the last time the minimum wage was increased in the sector.

"I am sure they will raise it again—they are businesspeople."

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Appendix E



The Cambodia Daily @cambodiadaily · Sep 25

Invited by @labourlabel for 'global day of action,' Cambodian garment worker visits London cambodiadaily.com/news/garment-w...



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Appendix F

BREAKING
Labor Committee Decides on \$123 Minimum Wage
Two Monks Arrested for Transporting Flags to Pagoda



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Yet Another CNRP Official Arrested Over July Violence

BY BUCHHARDT
A prominent opposition CNRP official with an outstanding court warrant for his alleged role in a July 15 clash at Freedom Park was arrested and sent to prison Tuesday.

Assembly Spokesman Says Gov't May Consider Nepotism Law

BY HUIJ ABANADO
National Assembly spokesman Chheng Vin said Tuesday that the government could consider enacting specific laws prohibiting nepotism in the public sector if anyone is able to show that similar laws exist in another country.



Police officers arrest a prominent opposition leader Tuesday morning outside the Phnom Penh Municipal Court. The man remained in custody until he was released to his family Tuesday for booking, police said Monday. (The Cambodia Daily)

Red Stunt Gets Boeng Kak Women a Year in Jail

BY SUKHO FARA
The Phnom Penh Municipal Court on Tuesday sentenced Top Vann and six fellow activists to a year in prison, sometimes after convicting them of obstructing traffic for placing a bed in the middle of Monivong Boulevard on Monday to protest the booking of their neighborhood.

Police Official Arrested Over Rumored Gun Bullets Dispute

IN BRIEF
Police Official Arrested Over Rumored Gun Bullets Dispute
Kak King Court From Village Representative on Trial
Police Hunt Man Who Molested Wife With As

IN THE FRONT PAGE



Reprisals

A short story by ALAN LIGHTMAN

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As Deadline Passes, No Evictions at Waterfall

BY SUKHO FARA
Authorities in Sihanoukville on Tuesday let pass a deadline they had set for a group of families to vacate the state land they are living on but warned them to leave voluntarily or face a forced eviction.

Combodian Red Cross Swaps Siam Reap Office

BY SUKHO FARA
The Siam Reap provincial office of the Combodian Red Cross has swapped land with a private company, moving from a prime spot in the heart of Siam Reap City to a cheaper plot 8 km away and on the outskirts of town, officials said Tuesday.

NEWS NEWS

Protesters Meet Over New Civil Servant Pay Dismal
Fired Workers at Grand Tour Allowed to Return

Cambodian Activists to Compete for Japan Beach Games in Phuket

BUSINESS
New Lotus Company Enters a Shipping Industry
SEA Reports Loans Due to Singapore

Cambodian Rubber Prices Rise After Four Price Agrees

OPINION
March With a Hollow Crown in Koh Kong
Kingdom

World Traveler: Day Trips Reveal on Teacher Quality

ANALYSIS
Cambodia's Economic Growth: A Cautionary Tale

OPINION
Cambodia's Economic Growth: A Cautionary Tale

OPINION
Cambodia's Economic Growth: A Cautionary Tale



Carnival, Roll On

BY SUKHO FARA
An annually recurring after-the-festivities carnival waders from across the country who made homes in and around their rides and attractions on Phnom Penh's Choeu Changan peninsula this past week are preparing to do it all over again.

Boats Flying By

BY SUKHO FARA
"Today happens to be the third day of the traditional 'Water Festival,'" and at night, when the sun turns copper red, the banks of the great river suddenly come to life...the long racing boats flying by in the frothy swirl of the waves."

In Phnom Penh, a Grand Urban Plan That Never Came to Be

BY SUKHO FARA
Designed by a team of architects headed by Vann Molyvann, the Siam River Front complex was an ambitious project to develop a heritage of prime overgrown land with affordable housing units, cultural centers and other public buildings. "But history got in the way."



Phnom Penh's Beloved Water Festival Returns

BY SUKHO FARA
Thousands of Cambodians resumed a centuries-old tradition Wednesday, streaming into the capital to party and watch boat races for the first time since 2013 revivers were killed in a police-induced stampede at the end of the festival in 2008.

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Appendix G



Appendix H

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Tuesday, November 18, 2014

NEWS BUSINESS FEATURES ARCHIVES ABOUT US

LATEST: Five Killed in Siem Reap Nightclub Fire

Trail of Forgeries Reveals Wood Smuggling Ring

BY PHAN ANA
When Hong Mong Heng, the owner of timber processing firm Brightway Furniture, applied to renew his wood export license in February, he had no reason to doubt it would be rubber-stamped.

CPP Says NEC Dual Nationals Ban Not Aimed at Pung Chhiv Kek

BY KUCH SAREN
Deputy Prime Minister Bin Chhin said Monday that the CPP's demand that dual nationals be banned from sitting on a reformed election commission is not intended to prevent Licadho President Pung Chhiv Kek from becoming its "neutral" ninth member.



Villagers from Preah Vihear province search through Phnom Penh on their way to deliver a petition at the National Assembly on Monday. (The Chhanna/The Cambodia Daily)

Villagers Staying at Pagoda March to Assembly

BY SUELLA VICKSON
Villagers from Preah Vihear province who for the past two months have been staying at Phnom Penh's Samakki Raingsey pagoda Monday marched to the National Assembly to deliver a petition demanding the return of their farmland.

IN BRIEF
Elephant Straps Triage Girl to Death in Koh Kong
Man Kidnapped in Thailand Released in Cambodia

JOB IN CAMBODIA

THE FRONT PAGE



Reprisals

A short story by ALAN LIGHTMAN

Court Upholds Convictions in Monivong Bridge Clash Case

BY KUCH SAREN
The Appellate Court on Monday upheld the intentional violence convictions against three men over a September 2013 clash between police and civilians on Phnom Penh's Monivong Bridge during which security forces shot dead a bystander.

Court Gives Khieu Samphan Deadline to End Trial Boycott

BY SUELLA VICKSON
The Khmer Rouge tribunal on Monday gave Khieu Samphan an ultimatum: tell his lawyers to end their boycott of his trial, or judges will take steps to expedite proceedings, which could include appointing a new defense team.

Beer Garden Crooner Named Inaugural Voice of Cambodia

BY SUELLA VICKSON
Bath Seyha got his start singing sad love songs to beer garden crowds in Kompong Speu province.

Activist Monk Allowed to Stay at Pagoda After Making Apology

BY SUELLA VICKSON
An outspoken monk given 48 hours to leave a Phnom Penh pagoda on Thursday has been allowed to stay, but remains stripped of his position as head of one of the pagoda's dormitories.

MORE NEWS

In Court, Suspects in Gang Rape Case Say Sex Was Consensual

BUSINESS

Three Firms to Join Stock Exchange

Unpaid Electricity From Dam Costing Millions

New Animation Center President Calls for Court System's Support

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FROM THE MAGAZINE



An audience watches a show by performers from the Banteay Angkor Basse Opera Company in Siem Reap province last year. (Charles King)

New Survey Spotlights Performance Artists' Wages, Working Conditions

BY SUELLA VICKSON
The idea of conducting a survey of performing artists' salaries and working conditions in Cambodia was born of necessity, said Phloean Prim, director of Cambodian Living Arts.

Carnival, Roll On

BY SUELLA VICKSON
As normalcy resumes after the three days of festivities, carnival workers from across the country who made homes in and around their rides and attractions on Phnom Penh's Choeu Chngpa peninsula this past week are preparing to do it all over again.

Boats Flying By

BY SUELLA VICKSON
"Today happens to be the third day of the traditional 'Water Festival,'" and at night, when the sun turns copper red, the banks of the great river suddenly come to life...the long racing boats flying by in the frothy swirl of the waves."

FEATURED STORIES



Lack of Detail in Deal Comes Back to Bite CNRP

BY JANE WYLLIAMS AND KUCH SAREN
When one of its senior officials was seized and jailed on Tuesday on "insurance" charges four months old, the opposition CNRP took little time interpreting the event as a warning to back down in the recently deadlocked election-reform talks.



After Arrests, Fear Permeates Outcast Pagoda

BY KIM DOWNEY AND SUELLA VICKSON
Since activist monk Seung Hai was arrested and defrocked for protesting peacefully outside City Hall on Tuesday, Wat Samakki Raingsey, a popular residence for dissident monks, has been under surveillance.



Without Hearing or Memory, Lost in Cambodia

BY SUELLA VICKSON
Sitting in a hair salon on the outskirts of Phnom Penh, a young deaf barber recounts what can only be described as an extraordinary tale.

Appendix I

