

Slavic News Media on the Internet

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Slavic news sites have clearly become viable propositions on the Internet, although it is often frustrating for librarians to keep track of the changes which are taking place in this fast-paced medium. News organizations find alternative Web providers, or close, possibly to reappear at a later date. In addition, since the Web itself is so poorly indexed, it is often impossible to learn about start-up publishing ventures in a timely fashion.

For the past three years I have maintained a page at AATSEEL Web site on Slavic and East European News Media on the Internet <<http://clover.slavic.pitt.edu/~aatseel/eenews.html>>. ¹ This page, while not comprehensive, provides an indexed guide to over 80 on-line newspapers, magazines, news agencies, and radio and television stations. There are many other guides on the Internet which provide broad coverage of available resources. Two excellent ones are found at Slavophilia <<http://www.slavophilia.net>>, and the REESWeb Russian and East European Studies Internet Resources on Journalism, Media Contacts, and Electronic Periodicals <<http://www.ucis.pitt.edu/reesweb/Media/medind.html>>.

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Over the years I have seen a growth of Slavic news sites on the Web. What started largely as a Russian phenomenon, has changed as news agencies, independent newspapers, and commercial publishing ventures from East, South and Central Europe, as well as the U.S., have established Web presences. There has also been the addition of more graphics, navigational tools such as frames, and plug-in features such as RealAudio and RealVideo.

One the greatest problems with Slavic Web sites has always been the display of non-HTML-compliant character sets such as Windows 1251, KOI8 and CROSCII. Of course, browsers such as Netscape can display some of these character sets without much of a problem: if your browser does not choose the proper encoding automatically, go to the View menu, choose encoding, then select the appropriate font if indicated.² Some sites have made the switch to non-Latin 1, ISO-8859 character sets, which are HTML-compliant and platform-independent, but presumably if UNICODE (the standard now being developed for a universal character set) is adopted in the next few years, this sort of browser incompatibility will become a thing of the past. We may see the introduction of new, innovative ways of searching and displaying text. The advent of paid advertising, now visible in the Java-enabled banner ads which predominate at many Slavic sites, may change the focus of editorial content as well.

Some Web news sites have fallen by the wayside, either shut down for political reasons or closed because of the high cost of maintaining them. Luckily, many sites remain free of charge, or accessible at a nominal cost. Below is an annotated list of news "megasites." Some Web sites are fee-based or require a subscription. I would be glad to be informed of any additional sites that could be added to my list (Curtdeyrup@aol.com).

- *Belarusian Media in Internet* <<http://www.internews.org.by/media.html>>
Links to Belarusian television, radio, information agencies. Newspapers include *Belorusskaia delovaia gazeta*, *Belorusskaia gazeta*. A project of InterNews <<http://www.internews.org.by/index.html>>, a non-profit organization which maintains similar sites for Russia, the Balkans, and other countries.
- *Bulgaria News Collection* <<http://www.b-info.com/places/Bulgaria/news/>>
Extensive links to Bulgarian national and regional newspapers

and periodicals, radio and television stations, and news sources in English. BTA-Bulgarian News Agency, *Demokratiia* (Democracy) Daily, *Kontinent* Daily to name a few.

- *Central Europe On-Line News* <<http://www.centraleurope.com/>>
An English-language daily newszine containing wire service news and original reporting. Broad coverage of Slavic and East European local and business news. Published by European Internet Network, which also puts out the on-line *RussiaToday*.
- *Newspapers of the Czech Republic* <<http://www.columbia.edu/~js322/czech.html>>
Numerous links to Czech television, radio, TV, newspapers, magazines. General resource site. In Czech and English.
- *On-Line Periodicals from Russia/NIS* <<http://home.eastview.com/epubs.html>>
U.S.-based provider of press digests, general/special interest publications from Russia and the NIS. By subscription. Note: some Web sites linked to this site may be available for free if accessed directly.
- *Polish Connections* <<http://www.zem.co.uk/polish/index.htm>>
Many resources about Poland, including links to press agencies, Polish Radio, TV, government information services, newspapers, magazines. Extensive and comprehensive.
- *Republic of Macedonia News* <<http://b-info.com/places/Macedonia/republic/news/>>
Daily news reports. Foreign wire services. Information agencies. Links to dailies *Dnevnik*, *Nova Makedonija*.
- *Russia On-Line* <<http://www.online.ru/emain/enews/>>
Well-established site. Subscriber access to news briefs, magazines, newspapers in Russian and English. Some titles for free. Includes *Kommersant Daily*, *Izvestiia*, *Finansovye izvestiia*, *Dengi*, *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, *Ogonek*.
- *Slovakia On-Line* <<http://www.savba.sk/logos/news/list.html>>
Well-organized news site. Economic, business, local news. *Narodná obroda*, *Praca*, *Pravda*, *SME*, *Hospodarské noviny*, *Trend*, others.
- *Ukrainian Press* <<http://ukraine.org/press.html>>
Links to the Ukrainian press.
- *World-Wide Web Croatia* <<http://www.hr/wwwhr/>>
This web server of the Republic of Croatia maintains links to

Croatian newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations, among many other resources. Established in 1994.

- *Yurope On-line Communications* <<http://www.yurope.com/company/index.htm>>

U.S.-based web provider for countries of the former Yugoslavia. From the index, links to magazines, newspapers such as *Republika*, *Mostovi*, *Monitor*. Mirror of local radio stations.

NOTES

1. URLs given here were valid as of the end of May 1999.-Ed.
2. Particularly for Cyrillic, you must have the appropriate fonts installed on your own PC. How to do this and assorted other problems that can be encountered with Web sites that are in non-HTML-compliant character sets are beyond the scope of this paper.-Ed.