

# HypergeneMediaBlog

"NEWS FROM THE  
BOTTOM UP"

All about **Participatory Journalism** - how audiences are changing the future of news and information.

Tuesday Mar. 02, 2004

## WeatherBug continues to let it's audience reign

[WeatherBug](#)'s ability to turn its audience into information "prosumers" has set it apart from most media companies in the past.

[AWS Convergence Technologies](#), makers of WeatherBug - the live weather desktop app for PCs, has a network of thousands of "communities" each reporting up-to-the-minute neighborhood weather conditions to millions of users. Recently, WeatherBug began offering users the option to choose the types of advertisers who can message them through the app.

But, it was this [press release](#) Monday announcing user-submitted photos, which caught our eye:

WeatherBug is one of a number of print, broadcast and online media outlets that are increasing giving consumers a role in the editorial process of reporting news. This trend is often referred to as "participatory journalism" or "open source media."

Wow. That's the first time we've ever seen a company talk about "participatory journalism" much less tout it in a press release.

"When it comes to weather, pictures tell the story... By giving them a role in this process, we have not only augmented our news coverage, but have also helped our users share their experiences."

**Andy Jedynak, Senior Vice President/General Manager for WeatherBug**

More wow. And this call for photos is not nearly an aesthetic exercise. In an earlier project, WeatherBug found that user-submitted photos were driving more traffic and, therefore, revenues. Hmm.

For WeatherBug, the power of participatory journalism is, uh, blowing in the wind.

**Related:** When we judged the 2004 NAA Edgie Award for Visitor Participation, we discovered the Santa Rosa Press Democrat's [Northbayweather.com - Weather Geeks](#). After posting a notice on the site asking any enthusiast with a backyard weather station to post their data, they now have 36 home-grown weather stations posting hyperlocal weather data. For really key locations, the

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newspaper is investing in their own weather station equipment.  
Here's a few articles about their project:

- [Digital Edge article](#)
- [Steve Outing: How's the Weather on the Web?](#)

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