

## Evri's Evolution From Search to Real-Time News Curation

Written by [Richard MacManus](#) / July 4, 2010 10:50 PM / [2 Comments](#)

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When semantic recommendations service [Evri](http://www.evri.com/) (<http://www.evri.com/>) [launched two years ago](#) ([http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/evri\\_beta\\_launches\\_search\\_less.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/evri_beta_launches_search_less.php)), the product (backed by Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen) was seen by many as a type of search engine. Nowadays, Evri models itself as a **topic-based news service**; in particular, tapping into the real-time streams of mixed media coming from Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other sources.

At the recent [Semantic Technology conference](http://semtech2010.semanticuniverse.com/) (<http://semtech2010.semanticuniverse.com/>), I sat down with Evri CEO Will Hunsinger. He called Evri the "topical equivalent of a Facebook stream."

The technology of Evri is much the same as it was two years ago - it connects together topics using Semantic Web algorithms - but the landscape in which Evri is playing has evolved. In 2010, real-time information streams dominate. So Evri now aims to be a **curation service**.

In a nutshell, Evri allows you to explore and track topics. Its homepage displays a current hot topic (at time of writing, it was Lance Armstrong and the Tour de France), with other trending topics offered in the menu (for example 'Gulf Oil Spill' is a featured trend and 'LeBron James' is listed as "Trending in US & World'). You may also enter your own topic into the search bar. Evri is like a mix between Google Trends and Google News, with liberal sprinklings of Twitter and Facebook.



The screenshot shows the Evri website interface as of Sunday, July 4, 2010. The top navigation bar includes categories like US & World, Entertainment, Sports, Business, Technology, and More. A search bar is present with the text "Search for the latest on...". The main content area is titled "LATEST ON: Gulf Oil Spill" and features a news feed with articles from ABC, Reuters, and Twitter. A "Today's Top Connections" diagram shows a central node for "Gulf Oil Spill" connected to other nodes: Joe Biden, Barack Obama, Tony Hayward, Bill Clinton, and Hugo Chavez. Below this is a "Latest Videos" section with a video titled "BP Spills Coffee".

### Whither Twine...

Evri made the news earlier this year when it [acquired failed semantic web bookmarking application, Twine](#) ([http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/paul\\_allen\\_backed\\_semantic\\_service\\_evri\\_has\\_been\\_a.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/paul_allen_backed_semantic_service_evri_has_been_a.php)). Curiously, Hunsinger described Evri as "the inverse of Twine" - because Evri does all the work, rather than the user. [Twine](http://www.twine.com) (<http://www.twine.com>) is an application that relies on its users to actively bookmark pages, a la the much more successful [Delicious](http://delicious.com) (<http://delicious.com>). Evri automatically collates topical information and presents it the user.

**Update:** *Twine founder Nova Spivack wrote in and stated: "Twine was in fact highly automated as well, but in a different way than Evri -*

Twine used NLP [Natural language processing] to auto-tag every entry, generate summaries, and used graph algorithms to make recommendations."

Where Evri shares similarities with Twine is in the ability for users to track a topic. Hunsinger said that Evri users may "follow a story as it evolves over time, and tune it." He described this as being like a "mini blog" for its users.

Twine appears to have been of most use to Evri for its underlying technology. Hunsinger told us that Evri is using technology it acquired from Twine to extend Evri's categories and for advanced filtering.

## What's Next

Evri is not short on ideas and innovation - for example it announced a **Sentiment API** ([http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/how\\_does\\_the\\_web\\_feel\\_evri\\_tells\\_you.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/how_does_the_web_feel_evri_tells_you.php)) last August. However some of these ideas are slow to eventuate. Hunsinger said that the Sentiment API is not in commercial deployment yet, because it requires much more media in order to calculate sentiment and it tends to work best with well-known people (like Barack Obama). However, Evri is working on incorporating data about shares, tweets, and more in order to beef up its Sentiment analysis engine.

The screenshot displays the 'Semantic Web' interface. On the left, there's a 'LATEST ON:' section with news articles from Guardian and tweets. In the center, there's a 'Today's Top Connections' network diagram with nodes for Stephen Wolfram, Nova Spivack, Paul Allen, William Dan..., and Amazon.com. On the right, there's a 'Latest Videos' section with video thumbnails and titles like 'Wolfram Alpha is Your On-Call Genius' and 'hakia band'.

The company is also currently working on what Hunsinger described as "Pandora-like recommendations," referring to the geographically-limited online music service **Pandora** (<http://www.pandora.com>).

Other expansion plans include launching one new channel per week, to extend Evri's topical coverage.

## Can Evri Compete as a Consumer App?

Evri is an interesting product and is currently being used by media partners like Hearst and Canwest.

However, Evri will likely continue to struggle as a consumer offering. It's competing against a plethora of real-time news apps - everything from TweetDeck, Google News, Topix, Techmeme, and more. I wouldn't be surprised if Evri is eventually acquired by a big media company for its technology, much as Evri snapped up the struggling Twine for the same reason.

214 tweets  
 15 people like this. Be the first of your friends.  
 retweet

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1. Evri is a great service and they have an extremely cool iPhone app.

I use them a lot, when I want to see in a glance everything around a certain topic - like you said Le Tour and Lance, before that the Giro, the Fifa

cup, etc.

Posted by: [Marfi](#) | [July 4, 2010 11:41 PM](#)

2. isn't it a plagiarism against the original source ?

Posted by: [hokya](#) | [July 5, 2010 6:01 AM](#)

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