

# Stroome

PROJECT	GRANTEE	INNOVATION	GRANT
<b>Stroome</b>	Stroome	An online video editing community which allows users to upload content and collaboratively edit	<b>\$230,000</b>

Eyewitness video captured by mobile phones or webcams has rapidly become a key component of news coverage. Stroome's platform was designed to allow multiple journalists or aspiring journalists to cover the same story and stream their footage to the web, replacing satellite truck technology with an inexpensive online solution. Stroome aimed to provide users with a robust online editing community where they can collaborate, share ideas and tips, and publish accurate, contextual news in real time. Despite challenges in working with developers and in finding supplemental funding, the platform earned praise and has seen growing adoption among users.

## THE INNOVATION

Stroome is the first online video editing platform to allow multiple users to collaborate on a project. Other online editing sites exist, but each requires users to exchange and transfer video files through other means (such as email) in order to work together to edit a piece. Stroome aimed to transform collaborative video editing into a more efficient process by allowing users to edit content together within their web browsers, add and view uploads with real-time streaming, exchange comments through remix or text, and publish finished pieces through their own blogs, websites, and social media channels.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Prototyped at USC Annenberg's Program on Online Communities in the fall of 2008, Stroome started small and aimed to iterate, scale up, and eventually roll out to a larger audience of journalists and journalism students. The project

was on its second iteration when it received its Knight News Challenge award in 2010. It used this funding to launch a third iteration of its platform, which would remedy the broken flow and functionality of its previous versions. Stroome hired a top Los Angeles design and user experience firm to partner with the project, held focus groups to gain user feedback for future iterations, decided on a new logo, and worked to find ways to make the platform's functions for sharing and collaborating on projects more intuitive.

One of Stroome's largest challenges was finding the appropriate third-party developer for the project. The project team identified only one company that had the technical skills and technology to create the necessary video elements for the project. Stroome ultimately created a partnership with this company, but experienced a number of challenges in the process of rebuilding its older Drupal platform from scratch using Ruby on Rails, which ultimately delayed its release. Stroome eventually launched its third iteration at TEDxUSC, in April 2011.

With this launch, Stroome aimed to become an essential tool in the classroom and for journalists in the field, and focused its initial marketing strategy on targeting students who are enrolled at journalism schools. The project used a strong social media campaign over Facebook and Twitter to build anticipation for its launch and to create an initial user base to help populate the site with content. Stroome integrated the tool in the journalism program in the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism and marketed the tool to a number of other journalism and digital media

programs nationally through email, RSS feeds, word of mouth, and presentations at relevant conferences and trade shows.

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## REACH AND OUTCOMES

Early signs of Stroome’s impact are evident in the number of users and number of videos edited within the site. By late fall 2012, Stroome had been used by nearly 1,300 users in 146 counties, who had created around 105,000 pieces of content. Stroome also garnered attention from a number of notable sources early on in the project, including blogger Keith Shaw, writer of the influential “Cool Tools Happy Blog,” BBC news web reviewer Kate Russell, and the *Guardian*, which endorsed it as one of the “top five social networks worth a browse.” To date, the project and its team have been featured in over 150 media outlets and recognized by major media organizations.

Since its creation, Stroome has been used by USC’s Annenberg School of Journalism and Communication, regional journalism programs including Columbia College in Chicago, and grassroots citizen journalism sites such as

FreeSpeech TV and the Bay Area Video Coalition. Stroome was also used in February 2011 by Egyptian protesters during the Egyptian Revolution when the government shut down social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter. The project initially targeted journalism classrooms and citizen journalism sites as its early adopters, but its user base shifted over time to include more high-school educators and students, rather than universities and professional journalists.

By fall 2012, Stroome was working to raise the money to sustain the project and to fix old functions and add new ones to the platform. In an effort to address the project’s reliance on third-party vendors which had hampered its ability to fix bugs and build new feature sets for the tool, Stroome eventually brought on a chief technology officer with a focus on rebuilding the platform’s video editing feature. Going forward, Stroome hopes to create a mobile version of the platform, to develop a white-label version of the product to be marketed to the corporate community, and eventually to begin charging fees for use.

### Social Media Mentions of Stroome

