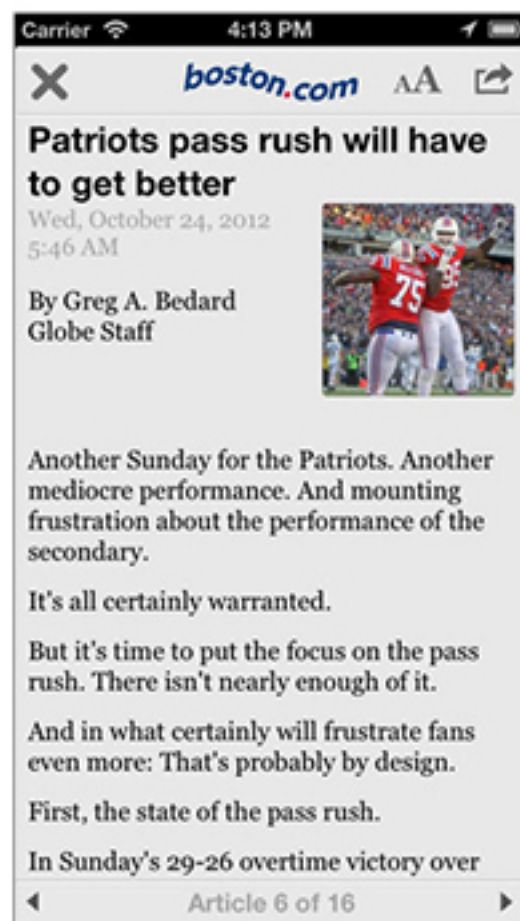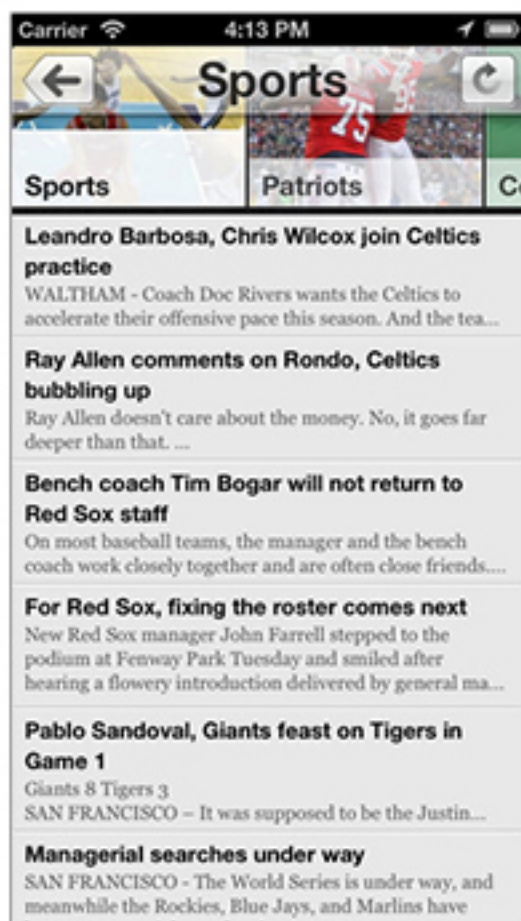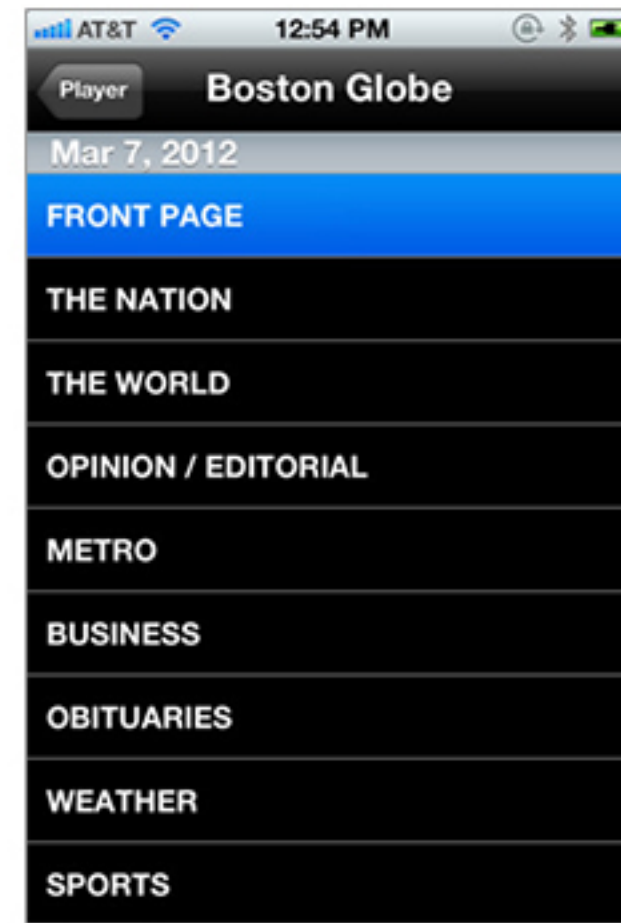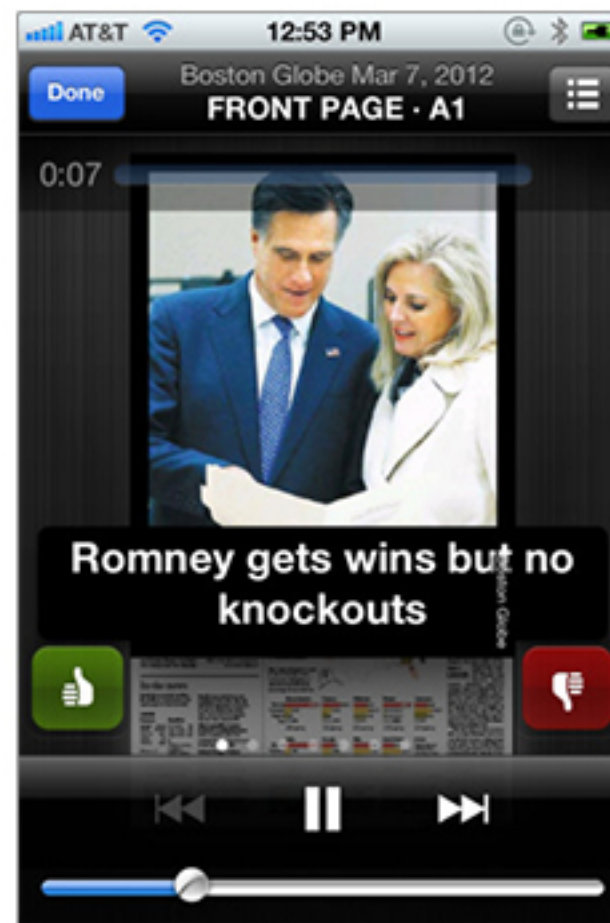# Boston Globe | Media Landscape

- Client: Boston Globe
- News Media: iPhone App competitive landscape (visual mood boards)
- 11.21.12

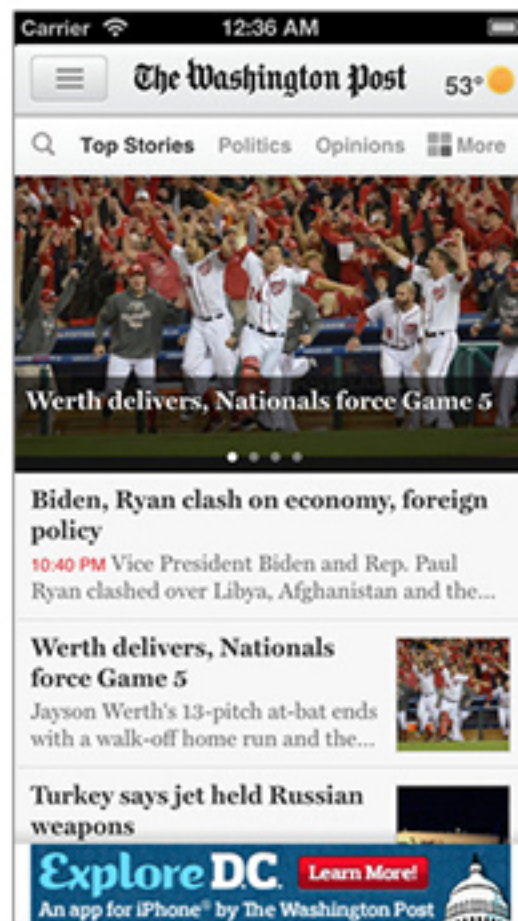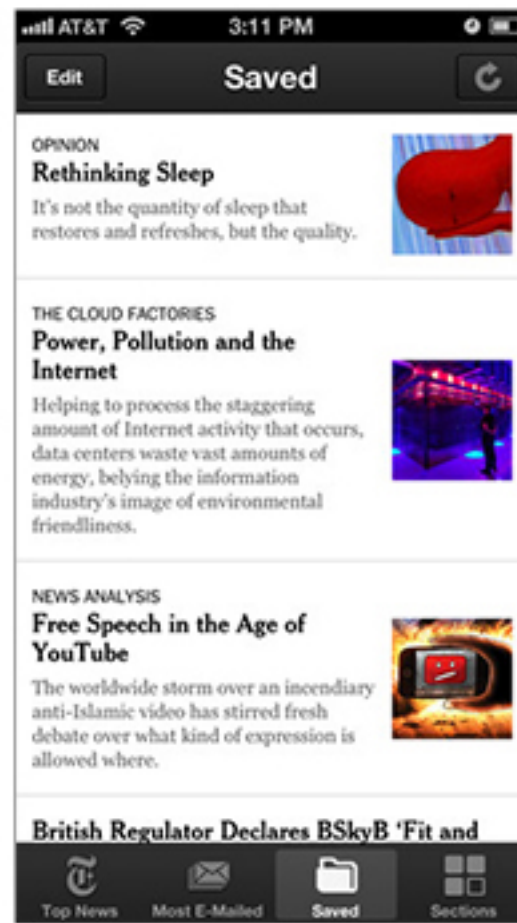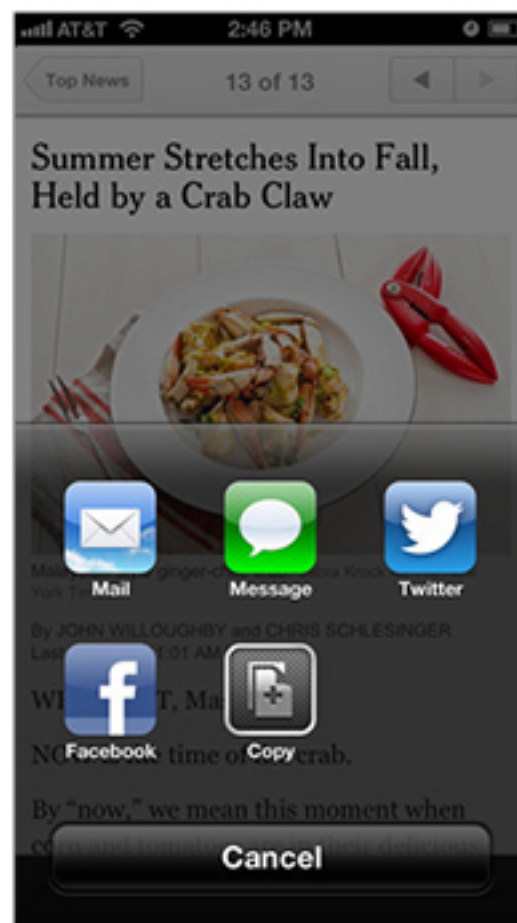Boston Globe (top row) and Boston.com (bottom row)

Boston.com

Boston.com screens (bottom row) on the Apple App store seem to emphasize their sports news section as the most appealing value to downloading their app. This clearly shows that they emphasize a regional focus and have a strong fan following. Typeface for headlines is Arial for an online news feel. There is little contrast in font-size scale unlike their BostonGlobe.com newspaper so there is a diminished sense of drama and visual emphasis. A serif font is used for their body text. Their grey background seems to be a reference to printed newsprint but gives a rather drab feel to the design in comparison to the white background used by other apps such as the NYTimes and Washington Post. Color palette consists primarily of navy blue, grey, black, light blue, and tiny bit of red accents in the logo mostly—colors are fairly subdued and seem to lack a brighter color accent for visual punch if they wish to have a bolder or youthful feel.
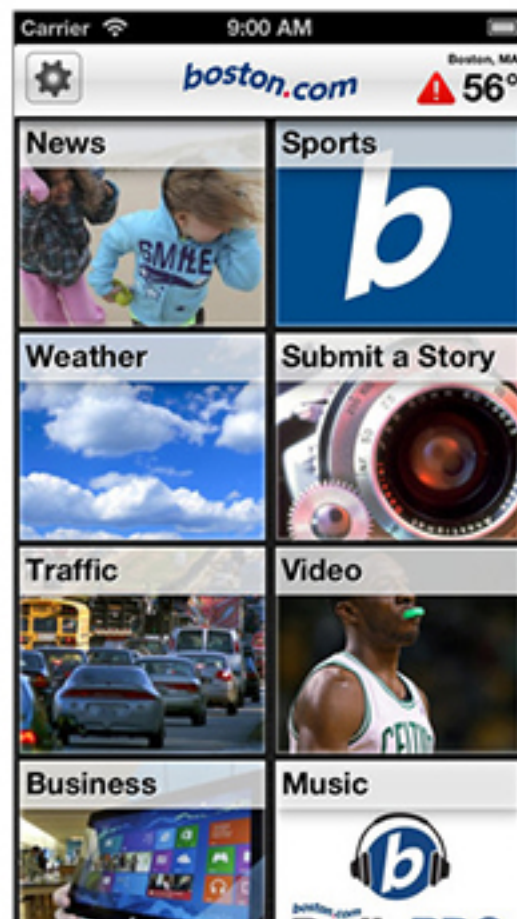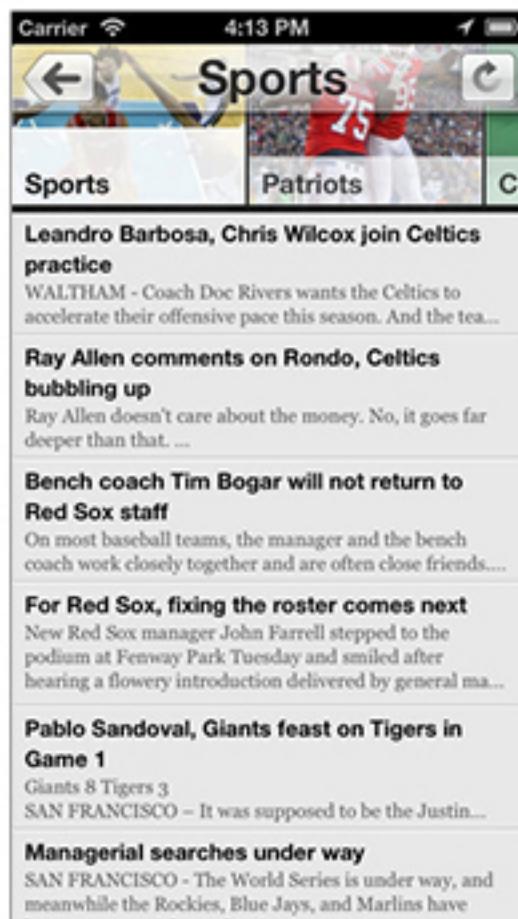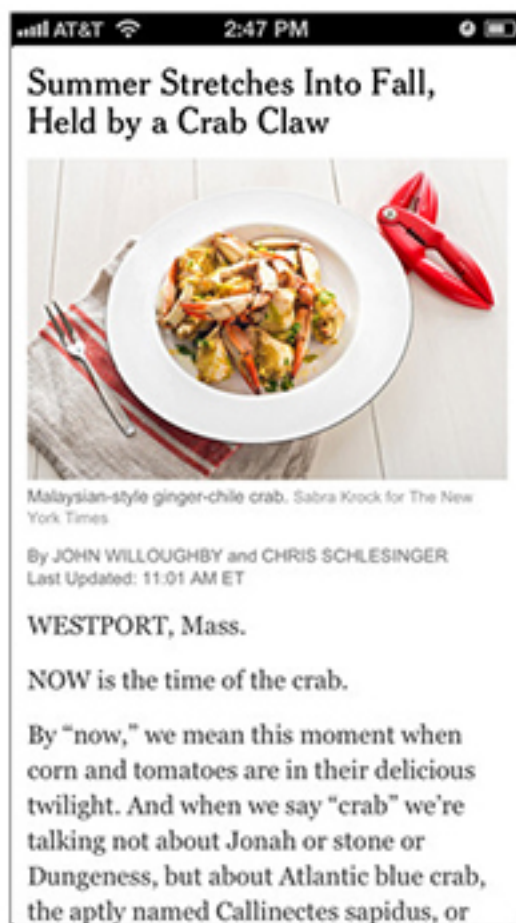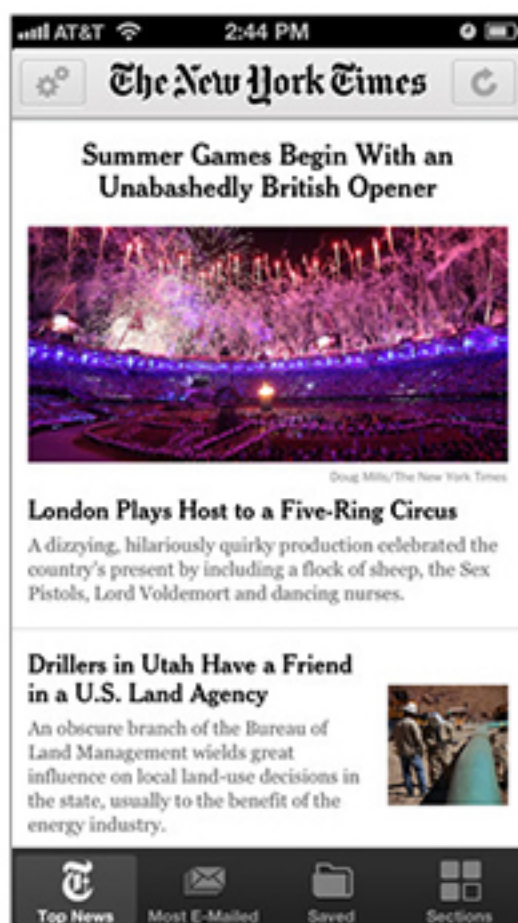
NYTimes (top row) and Washington Post (bottom row)

NYTimes

New York Times—Boston Globe's parent company—seems to be either the most or one of the most popular news apps. They use a traditional serif typeface for bot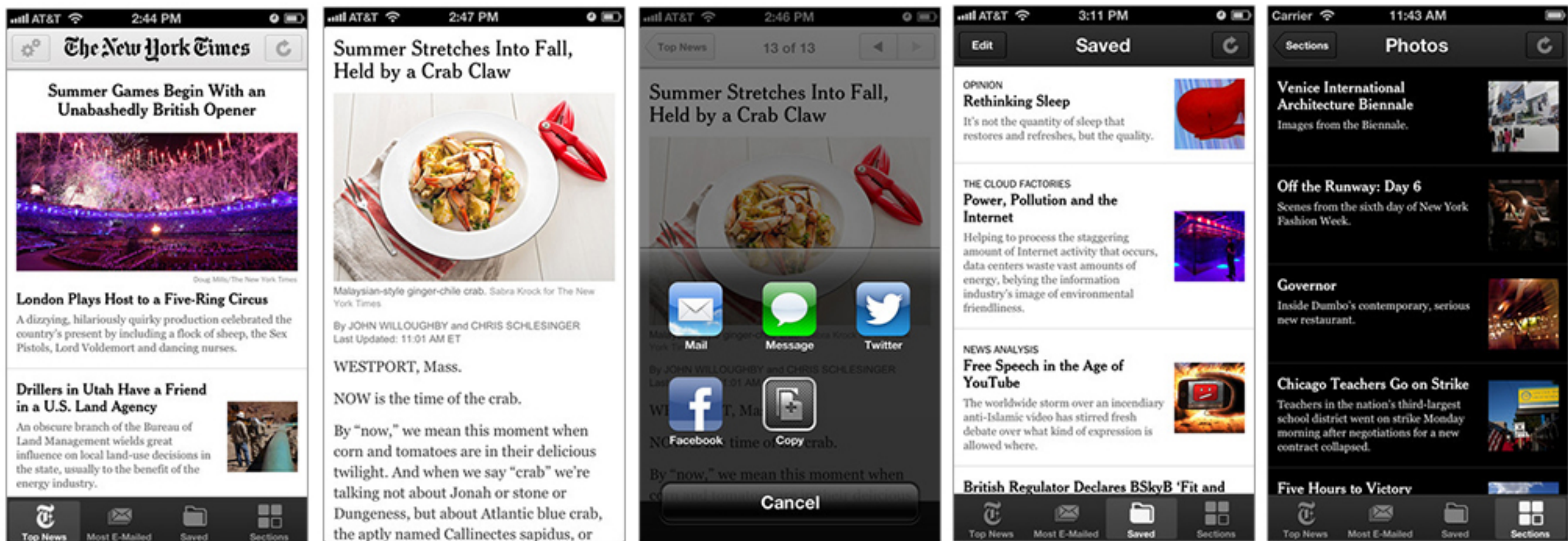h their headlines and bodytext for a more classic feel. Their clean, well-organized design gives their classic elegant look and feel a modern take. They effectively employ contrast in text's tonal value with boldfaced and high-contrast black for headlines and softer greys for body text. Thus, their headlines pop first for those who wish to scan headlines first before getting lost in text paragraphs. I like how they give users context with their all-caps section subheads (4th screen from left). Their attractive and colorful hero photos offer their pages a focal point like their printed newspaper does. Smaller rectangles of photo images add color and visual interest to each page. Both NYTimes and the Washington Post employ reverse type on a black background to highlight certain photos and videos in special featured stories for more dramatic framing of visuals. Their generous white space between each section is effective for content chunking and readability.

I like how NYTImes allows users to access their "Top News" and "Most Emailed" to view both major stories that NYTimes deem noteworthy and "most emailed" articles reflect popularity of articles for built-in spontaniety. "Saved" implies content the user has saved for access to personalized sections. "Sections" seems to make sense as a category since people can then navigate to their favore sections although maybe we can save that type of data.

Washington Post looks most similar to the NYTimes in their aesthetics. We may want to look to New York Times primarily for visual and UX inspiration since their apps are very popular and seem to present information very thoughtfully and cleanly among modern classic looking news media apps. Both the NYTimes and Washington Post fill the navbar with their logo masthead as a reference to their traditional newspaper feel whereas the apps like NPR app don't perhaps since they don't have a print newspaper origin.
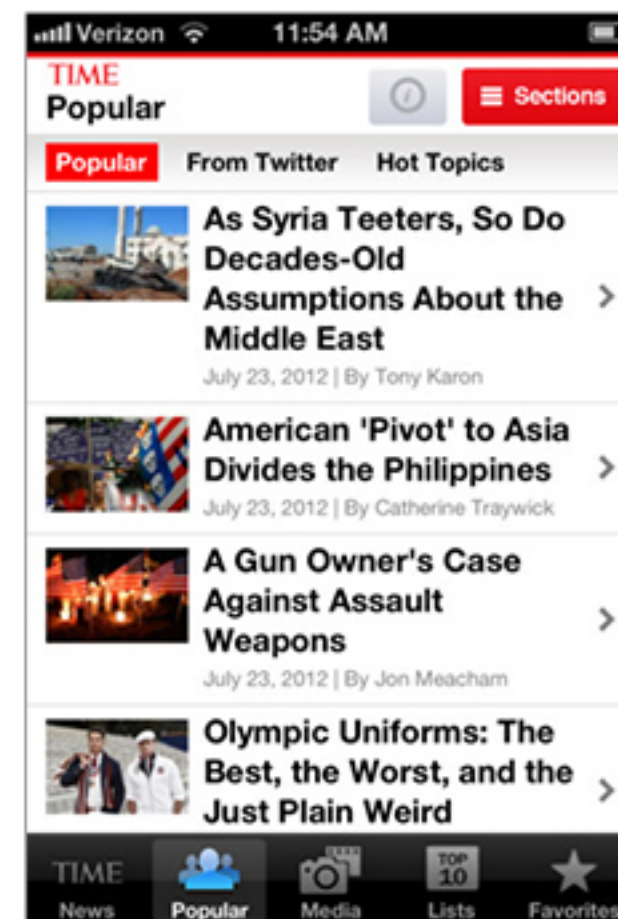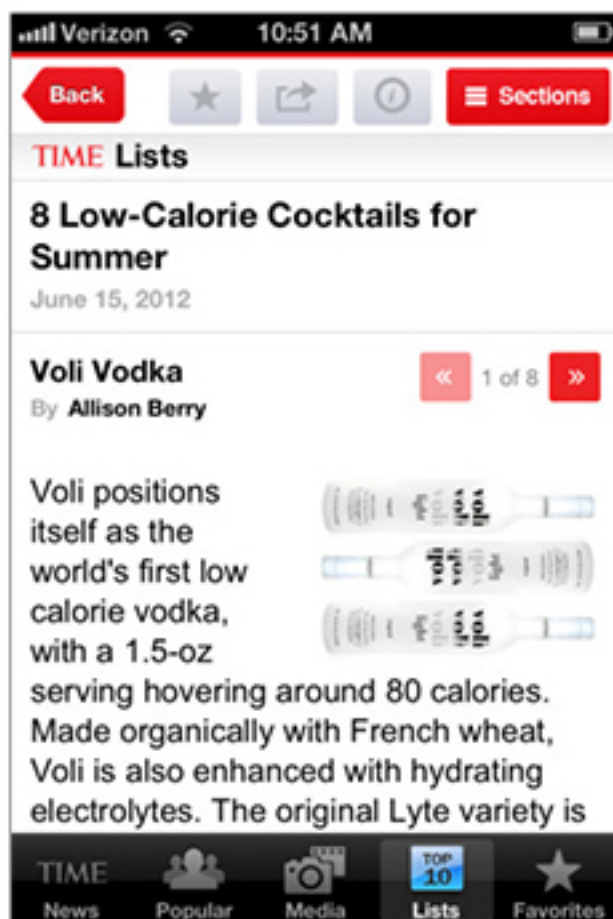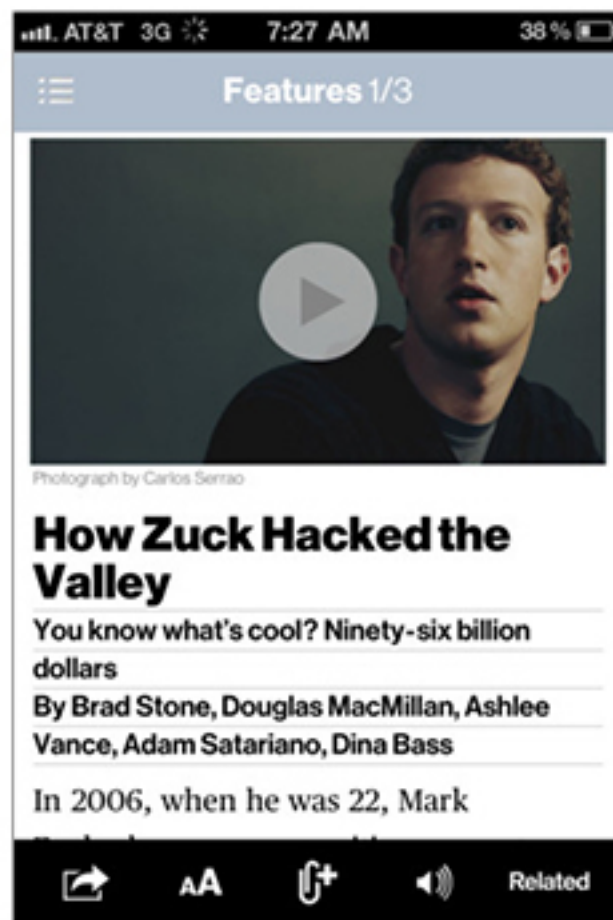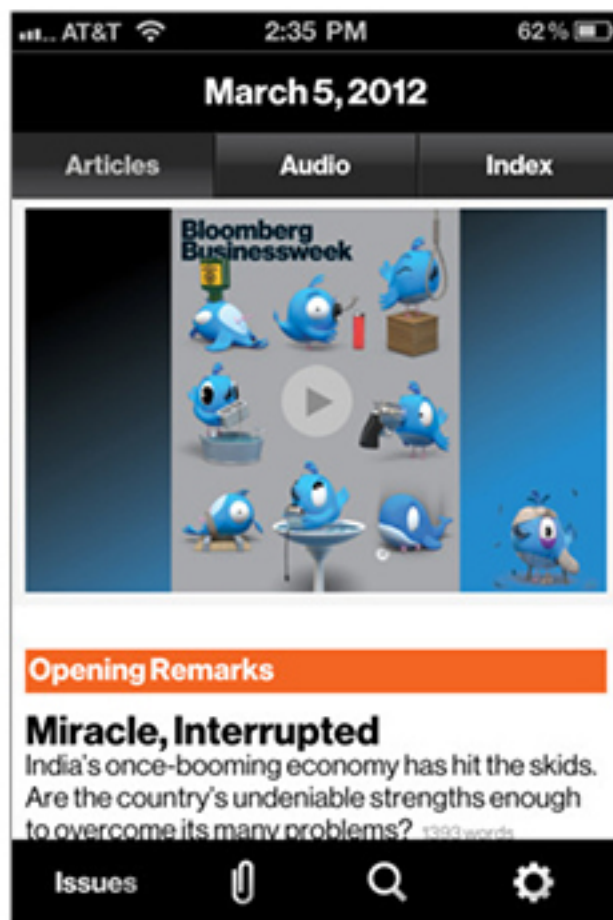
Business Week (top row) and Time Magazine (bottom row)
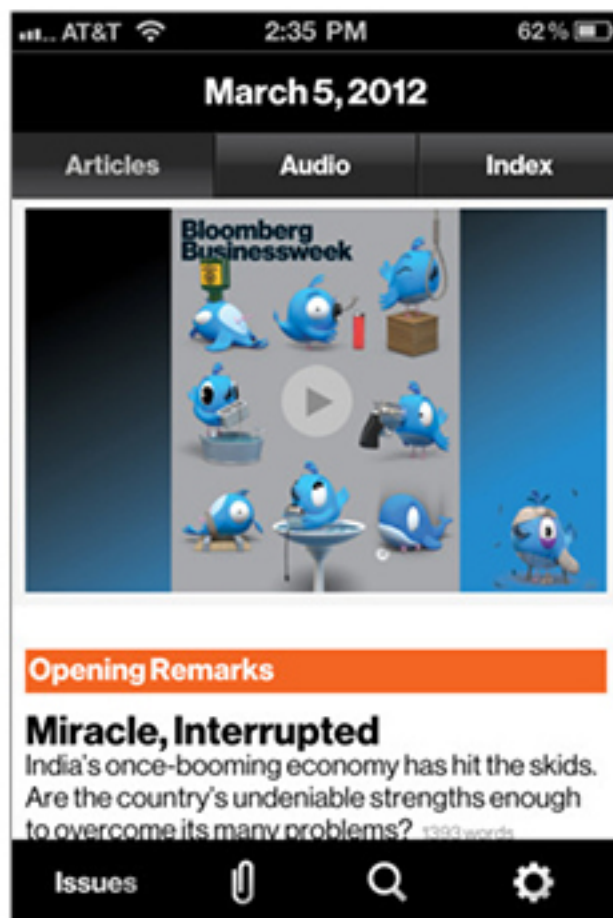
Business Week

Both Business Week and Time Magazine exude a bolder look and feel with their stronger color contrasts, boldfaced and larger-scale headlines for more drama. They both use a sans-serif for a modern look and feel. I think Business Week is particularly effective in creative an inviting, exciting and contemporary take on visual design. If Boston Globe prefers to do a visual refresh based on their current Boston.com website that employs a sans-serif instead of the NYTimes classic serif-based look and feel, I recommend we look at Business Week as inspiration for a bolder and more modern take on the info presentation. The scale contrast in the text's font size enables readers to quickly scan headlines first and conveys a stronger information hierarchy.

Each major section of the Business Week screen designs has a different masthead color—black, grey, blue and red—to help readers keep track of the sections on which they've landed. Effective use of brighter color bars to jazz up the screens. Navbars and tab bars use flat colors for a modern look and feel.

Boston.com's colors, on the other hand, feel more neutral and conservative with their use of navy blue, black, light blue, and grey with the tiniest hints of red. For the most part, their colors feel more drab in comparison to these designs largely because they use a light, old-school newsprint dingier grey background that dulls the impact of text and colors.
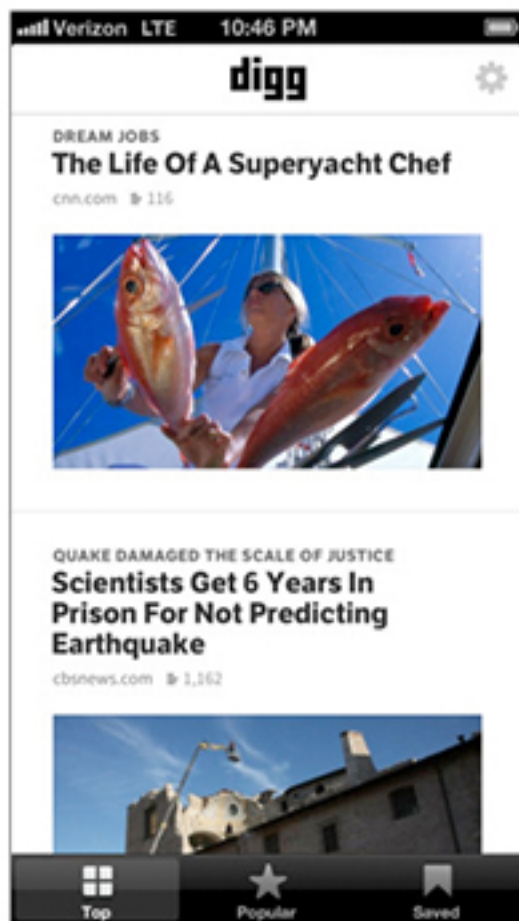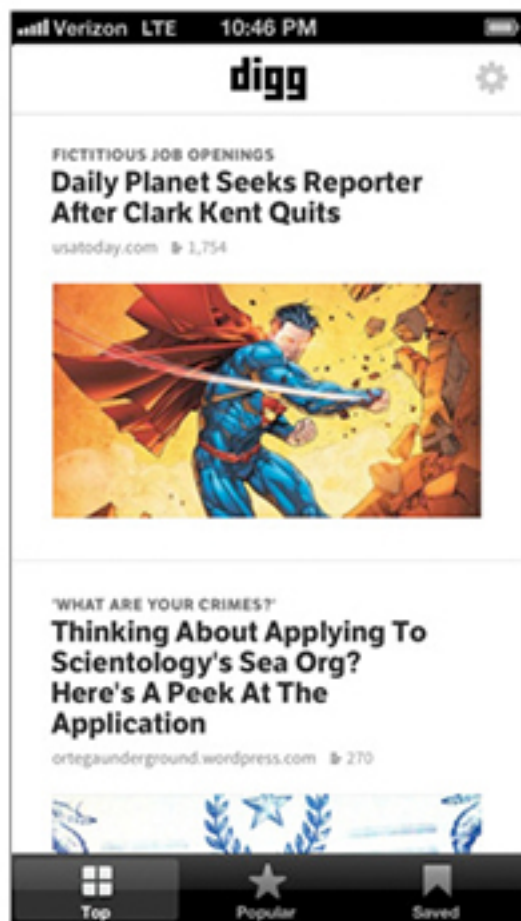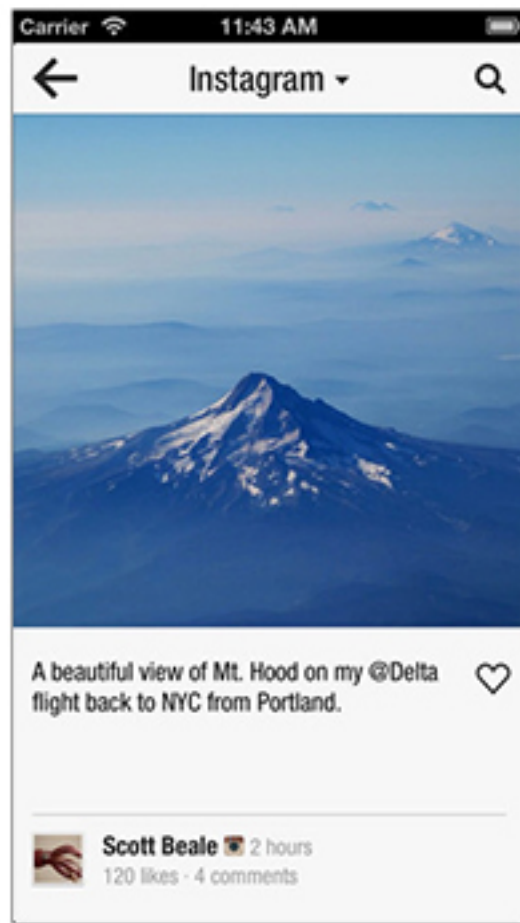
Flipboard (top row) and Digg (bottom row)
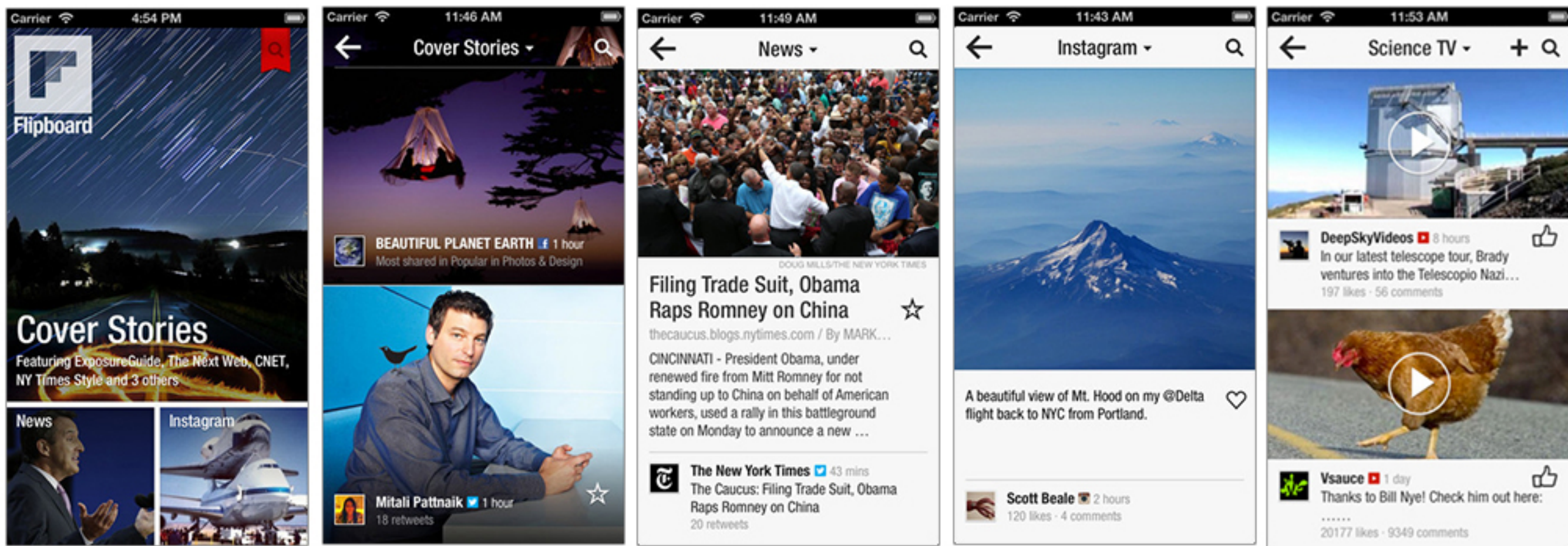
Flipboard

FlipBoard and Digg both exemplify a very hip, modern look and feel that is largely defined by their use of a digital-inspired, geometric typeface. FlipBoard uses a condensed sans-serif typeface that economizes on space and feels modern.

The flat color / white space in the navbar area imbues the design with a more unusual contemporary look. Offering plenty of white space and bars of white space (e.g. Science TV) help to effectively chunk information for increased scannability. Photos fill the screen from the left to right edges for a more immersive feel as it does in the Mt. Hood photo (4th screen from the left) with its limited text on that screen.

Twitter references and subheads are suspended over images to convey a sense of real-time commentary and multi-stories layered over a central story.

THE DAILY BEAST

May 24, 2012

Tight Race in Egypt

As the nation votes for the second day, a crowded candidate field and inconclusive polls make it all but impossible to accurately forecast…

The Road to Nowhere
by *Noah Kristula-Green*

HOME   CHEAT SHEET   ARTICLES   THE DISH

CHEAT SHEET
MUST READS FROM ALL OVER

May 24, 2012

1. FALLOUT
Facebook Faces Trading Problems

2. FRONT LINES
Female Soldiers Sue to Lift Combat Ban

3. CORRUPTION
Inquiry Grills Murdoch Lobbyist

4. OUTSPOKEN
Chinese Dissident: Prosecute Officials

5. NEW LEAD

HOME   CHEAT SHEET   ARTICLES   THE DISH

GALLERIES

Kim Kardashian: Kopy Kat

Photo of the Day

Lauren Greenfield's 'Queen…

Angelina Jolie, Lucy Liu & Mor…   White House Guest Log: Opr…

GALLERIES   ENTERTAINMENT   BOOKS   ART

Articles   **THE DAILY BEAST**

Tough on China
by *David Frum*

AFP-Getty Images

In his newest general election advertising message, Gov. Romney continues to hit at China as a currency manipulator. An under-

T-   T+   Share

◄ LIVE RADIO   **BBC NEWS**   Edit

GULF OIL SPILL: President Obama says US agency overseeing oil drilling 'plagued by corrupt…

TOP STORIES   Updated: 19:21

Obama defends oil spill response   Spain approves cuts in tight vote   Facebook changes are 'not enough'

AMERICAS

US predicts busy hurricane…   Obama strategy stresses dip…   US economic growth revised down

TECHNOLOGY

Pakistan eases curbs…   Spycams aim to thwart   Apple now bigger than

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Back   **BBC NEWS**

Technology   27 May 2010 15:08

Spycams aim to thwart terrorists

TAP TO PLAY

Scientists have been testing ground-breaking technologies which it is hoped will help disrupt terrorist activities.

-A   A+

Back   **BBC MUNDO**

Mundo   27 May 2010 13:13

España aprueba los recortes más duros de su democracia

Redacción
BBC Mundo

Un sólo voto en el Congreso permitió al gobierno de España llevar adelante el grupo de medidas más duras de los últimas décadas

Elena Salgado

en un intento de reducir el déficit presupuestario, atajar la crisis económica y dar confianza a los mercados.

Las medidas -presentadas hace dos semanas-

-A   A+

◄ LIVE RADIO   **BBC NEWS**

LATEST: Hurricane season could be one of the more active on record, says US climate agency NOAA

TOP STORIES   AMERICAS   TECHNOLOGY   FEATURES AND ANALYS…

Spycams aim to thwart terrorists   Apple now bigger than Microsoft   ID card scheme 'axed in 100 days'   iPlayer debuts social functions

The latest share price changes have pushed the total value of Apple past its rival Microsoft for the first time since 1989.

Done   00:04   -01:57

Daily Beast (top row) and BBC News (bottom row)

Daily Beast

Daily Beast—an American news reporting and opinion has interesting section called "Cheat Sheet" (second from the left). Presumably this section features top 10 featured stories. Numbering the "Must Reads" helps people keep track of total headlines they've seen. It seems quite popular globally according to Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Daily_Beast

I like the format since it is a list of headlines that link to the full text of the articles so it economizes on space and gives a general sense of top storylines and helps people decide if they want to view more details. Attractive Cheat Sheet presentation for easy scannability.

BBC News

BBC News—a well-respected global broadcast news based in the UK—also features a prominent red as an accent in their design. The strong red gives the site a more bold, dynamic feel. Since they offer tv-based coverage, like ABC, NBC, CBS, there is more video features that give the impression of real-time news coverage.

Interesting idea represented in the screen above to feature a story summary or key idea below each technology story. Readers short on time and who may just want a quick idea of the main story highlights before proceeding to read further, can potentially scroll to the left to view more stories with accompanying key highlights described below.
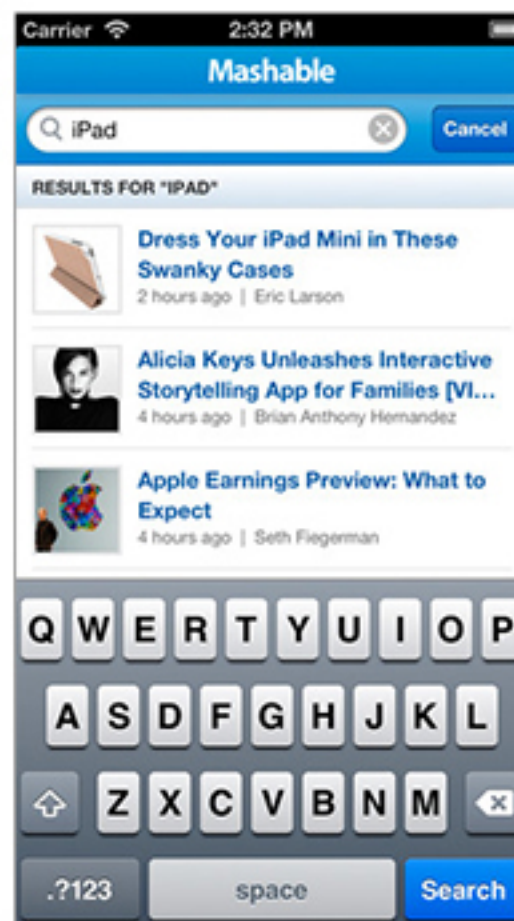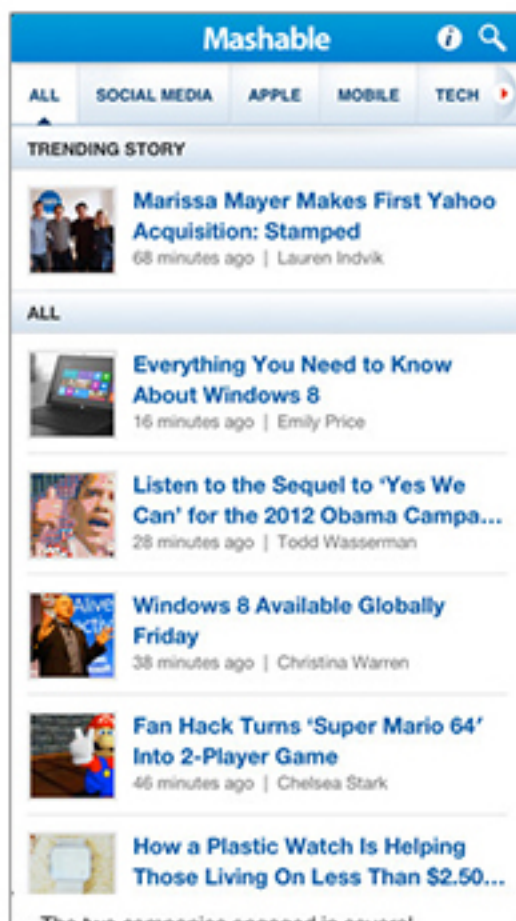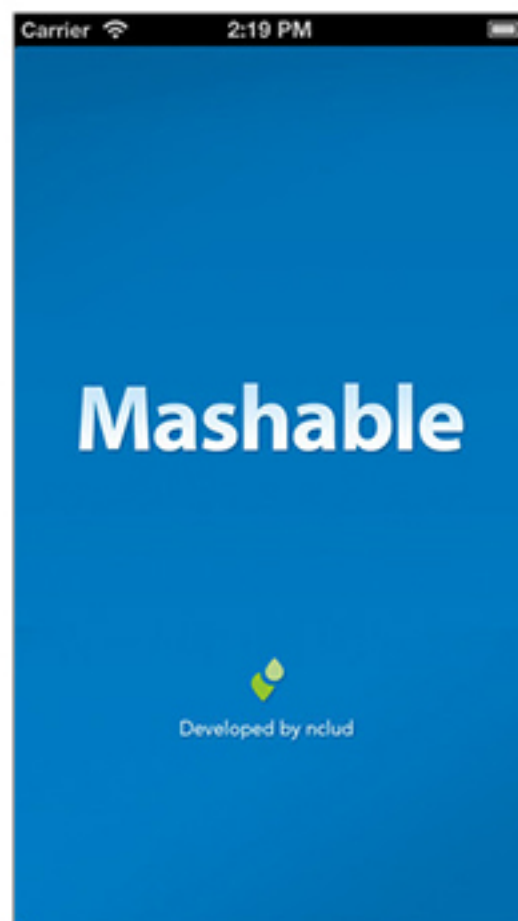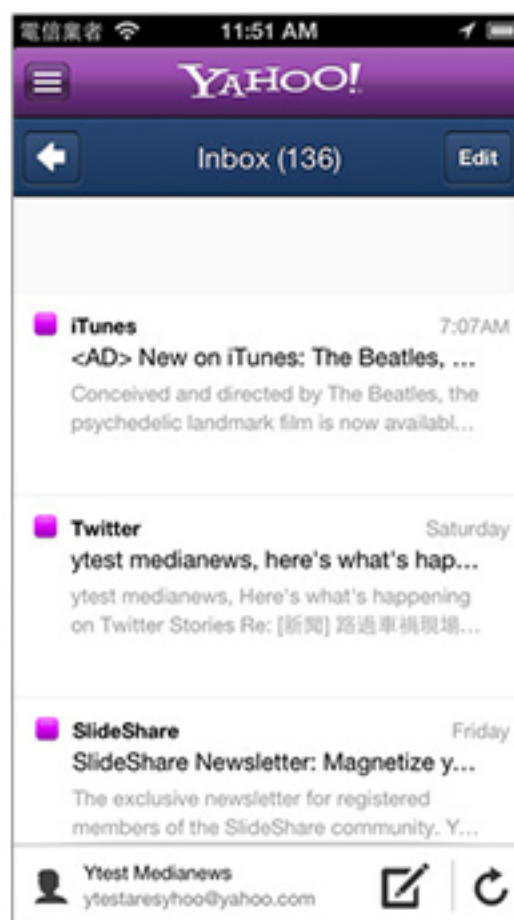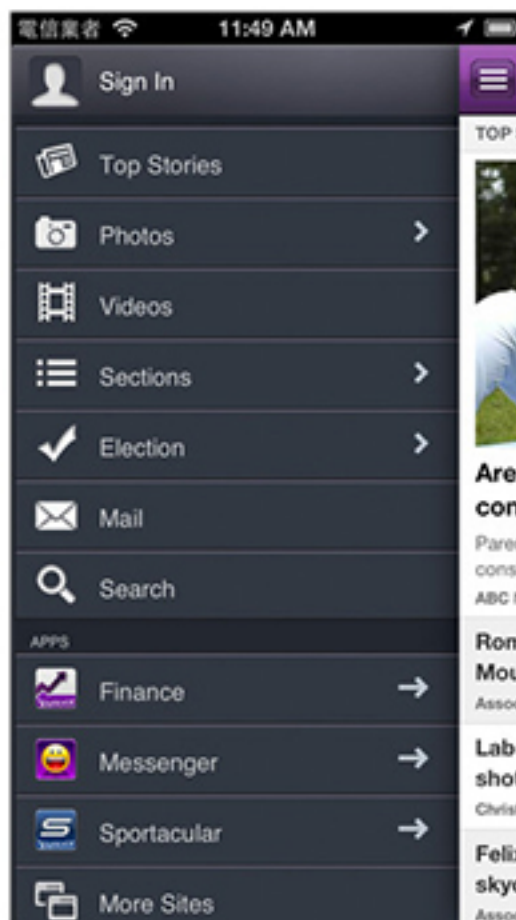
Yahoo (top row) and Mashable (bottom row)
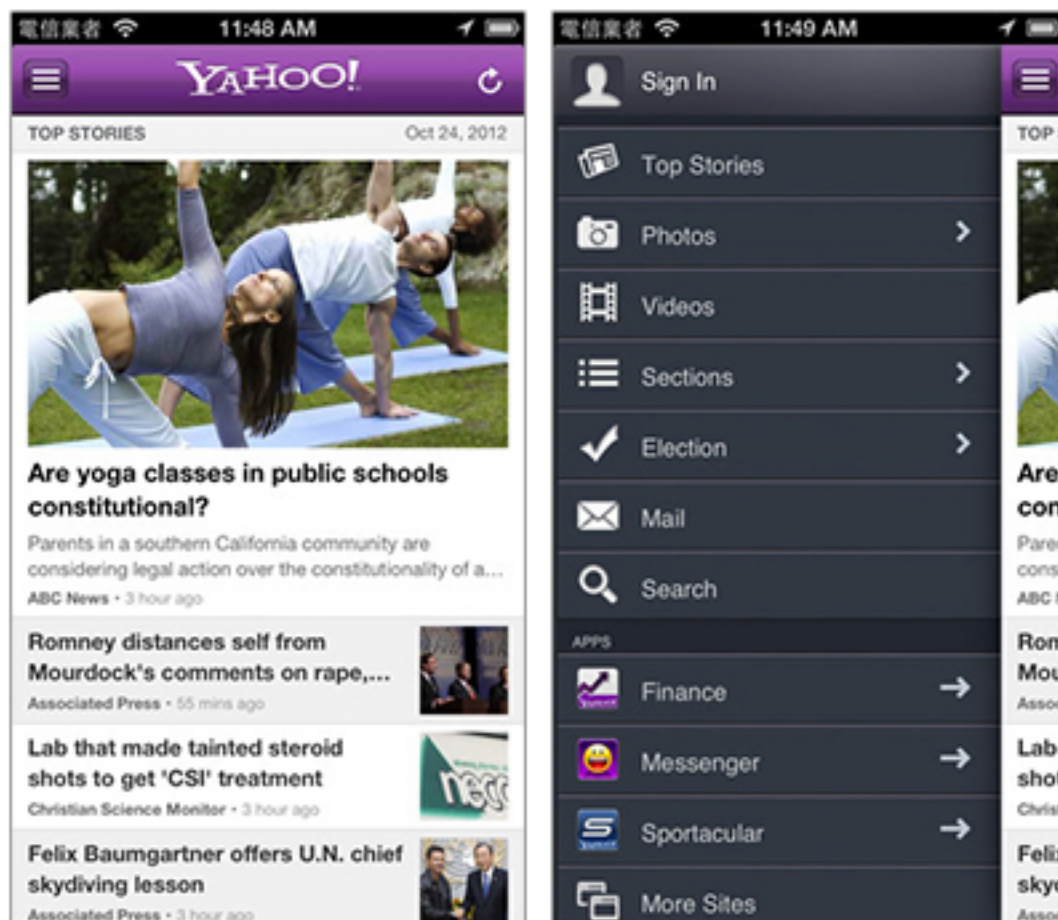
Yahoo!

Yahoo and Mashable blog— both exemplify a modern website-inspired design look and feel. Yahoo's app use of brighter accent purple paired with their nuanced deep plum-charcoal grey (in the second screen above) is a lovely color combo that is easy on the eyes and feels lively with the bright color accent. Since their shade of "grey" is more nuanced, the grey color adds visual interest even as a neutral color. Good contrast in tones between black headlines and lighter bodytext.

Effective use of alternating rows of text to enable more perceived content chunking in the first screen.
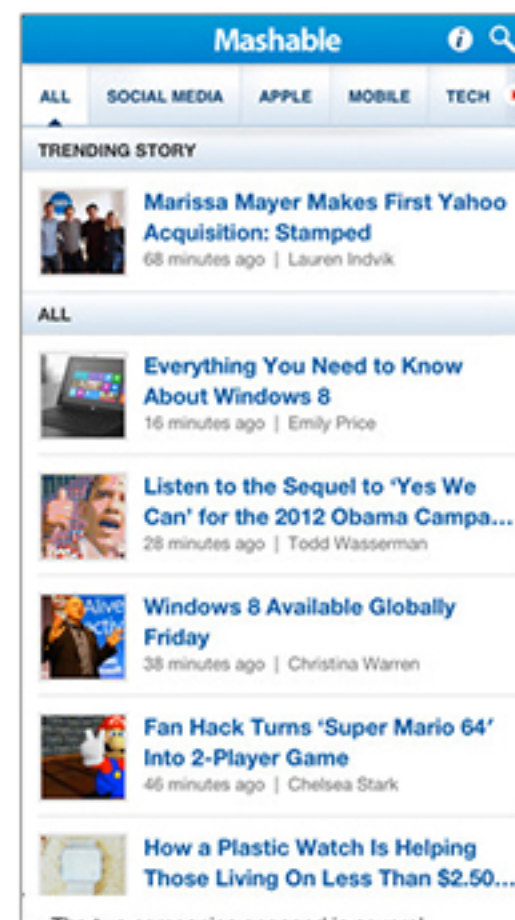
Mashable

Mashable offers a more streamlined color palette limited to a bright turquoise blue and grey text. Their shade of blue is more brightly colorful than Boston.com's site which gives this app a more youthful, dynamic feel.

It's interesting how they separate "Trending Stories" from "All" stories below to distinguish top stories from the rest of the stories to help readers prioritize stories in this case where there aren't tab bars to go to a specific tab-bar section for "Top Stories" similar to the way that NYTimes does it. It may good to note how they define a "trendiing story" from a "top story." Trending stories could potentially be the most recent stories or stories most frequently emailed or tweeted.
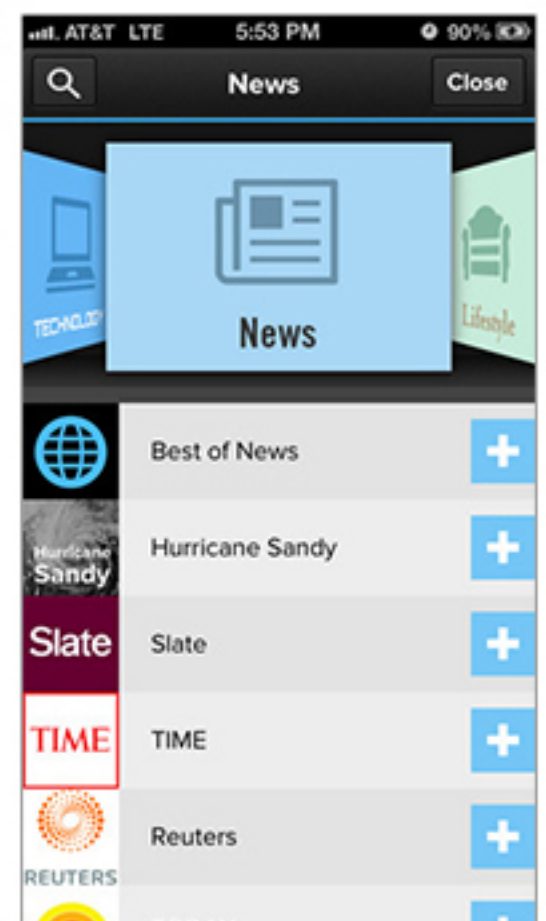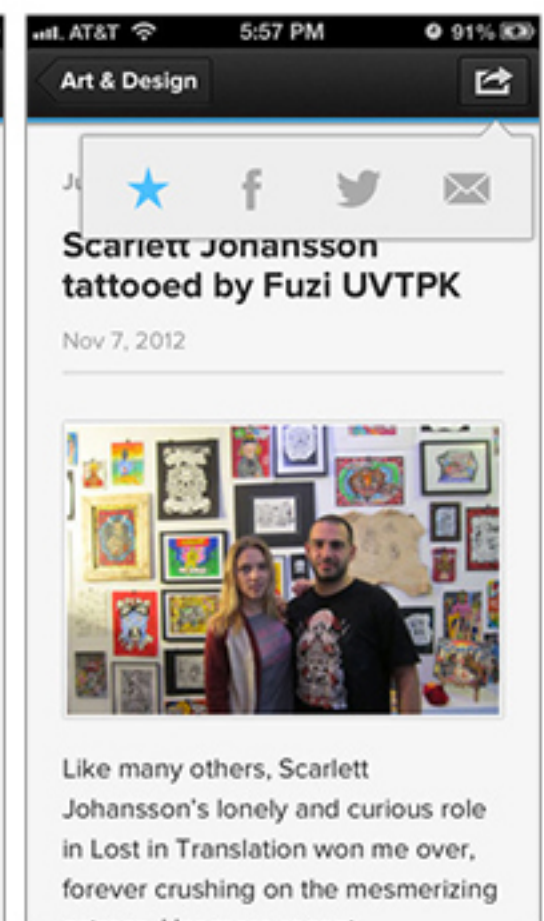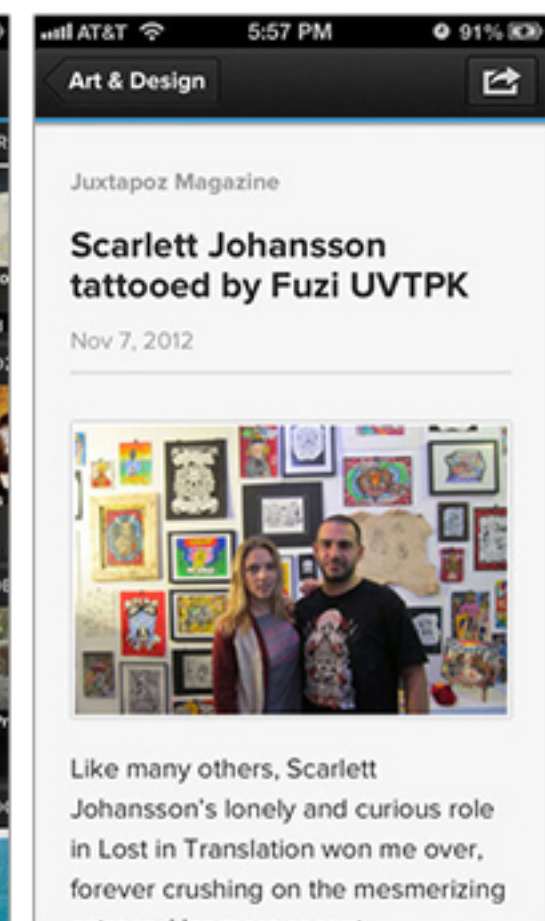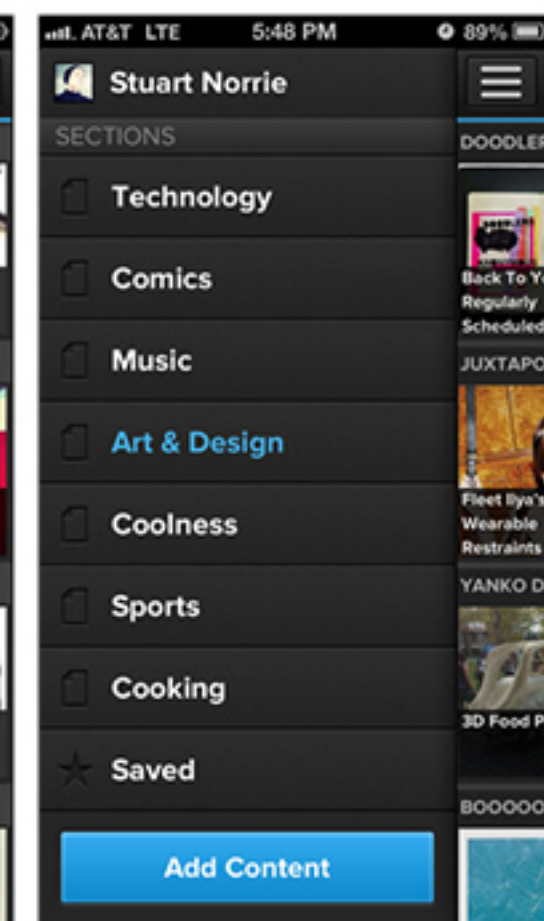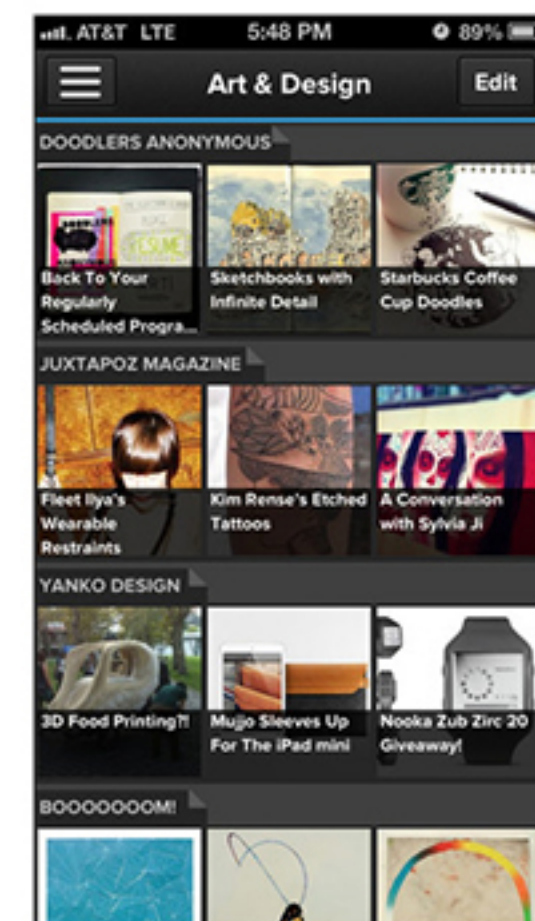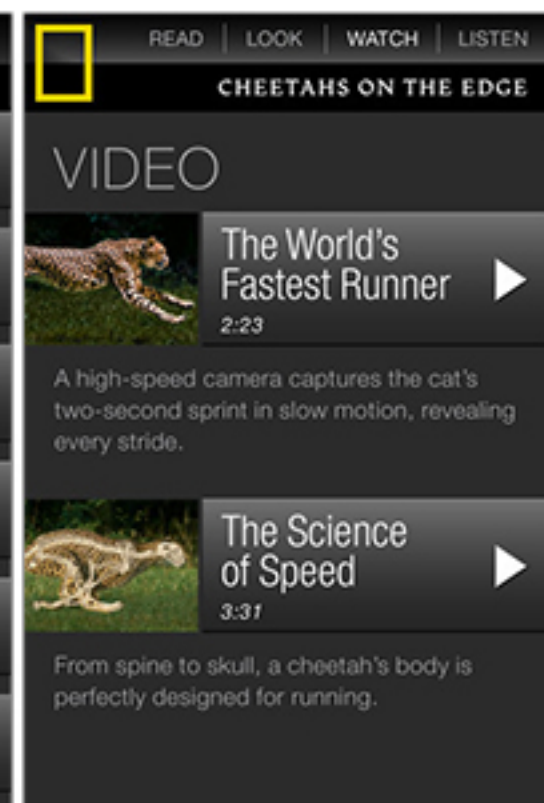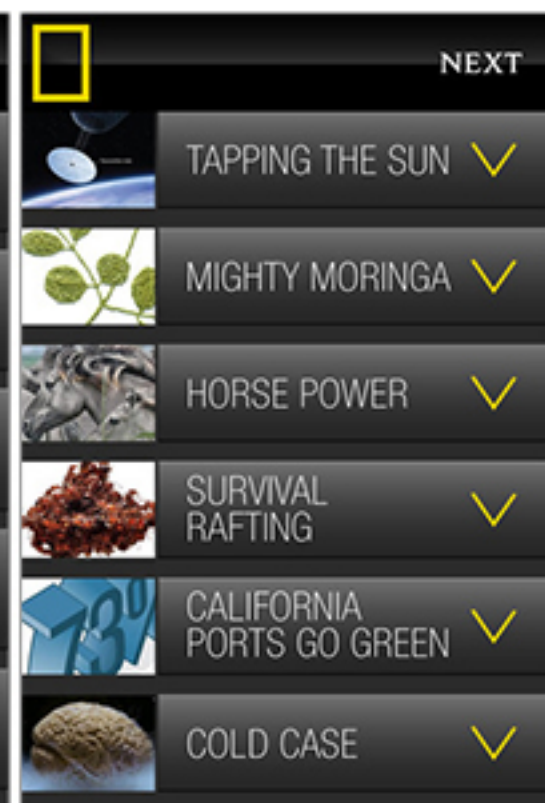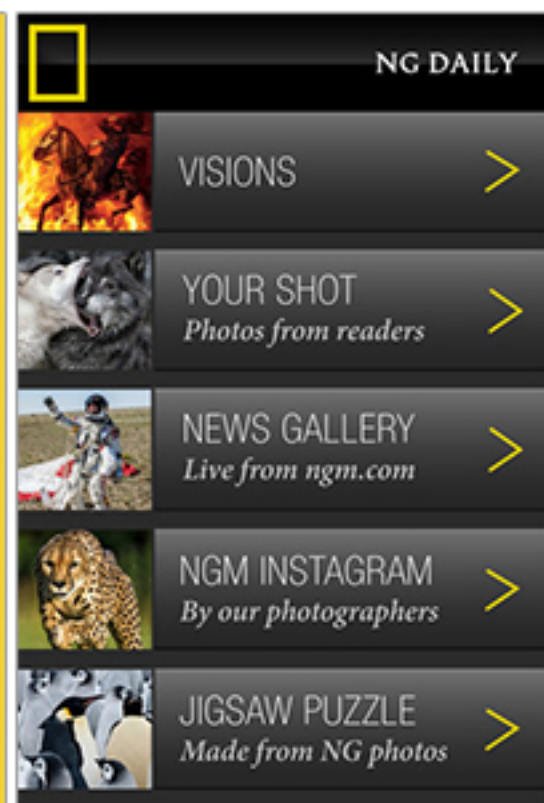
National Geographic (top row) and Pulse (bottom row)

National Geographic

Pulse

National Geographic Magazine and Pulse both feel modern with their use of nice sans-serif treatment. The use of lighter weight typeface in a large scale in the "Cheetahs on the Edge" page most exemplifies this sleek feel with plenty of white space to emphasize a cover story. The key idea to take from this page is the idea of featuring an important key story more dramatically with a full screen image bleeding to the edge for full immersion with limited text.
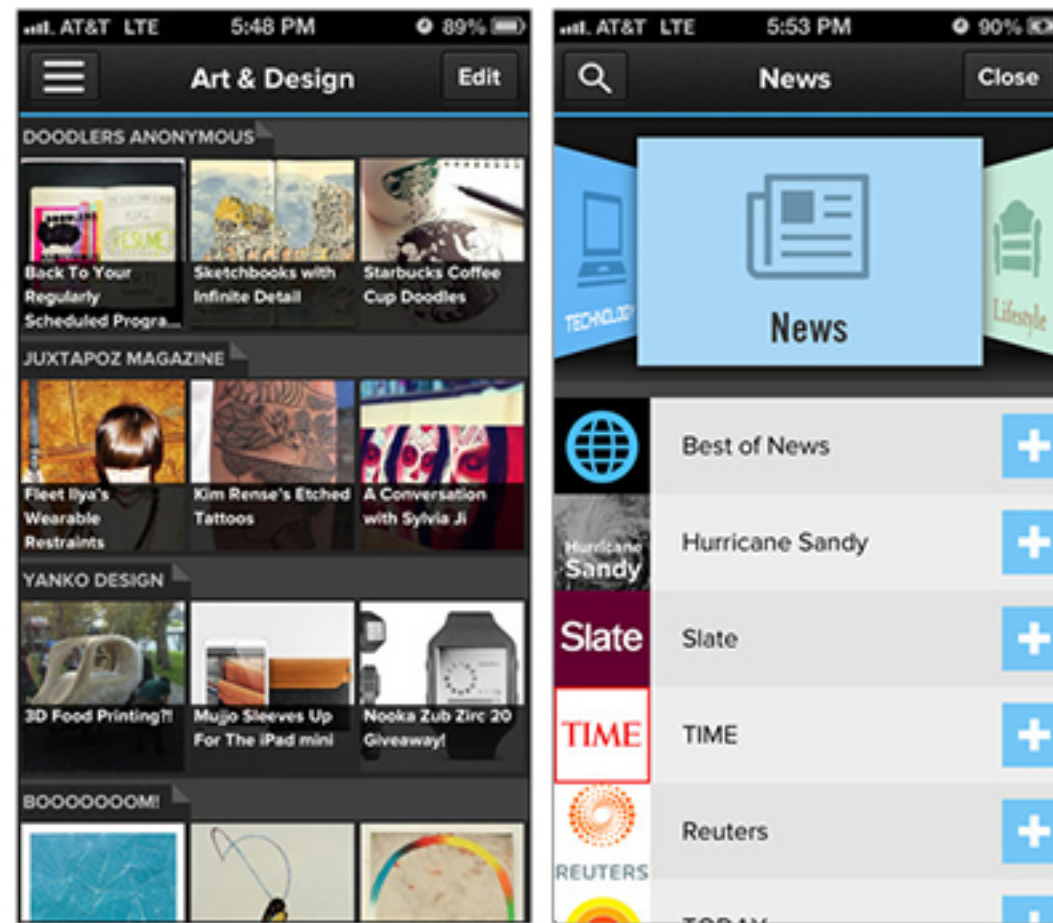
Pulse also uses white space effectively with brighter baby turquoise color as bars of color to serve as an accent to give the design a more youthful and dynamic feel.

Featured above are two ways of presenting information that may be noteworthy points of discussion. First screen on the left uses a photo gallery presentation to showcase key stories. In Boston Globe's case, featuring the title of the articles or some key fact below each photo in a similar fashion would enable the readers to easily glance at the photos and get a a general idea about the stories. On the second screen from the left, if we were to extrapolate the features on this page to Boston Globe, we could potentially present a top cover story or perhaps several stories in the carousel above for people with short time to read to get a gist of top stories in a given section. Below the larger featured stories could be a list menu displaying other recommended articles with photos to accompany them like NYTimes app does.
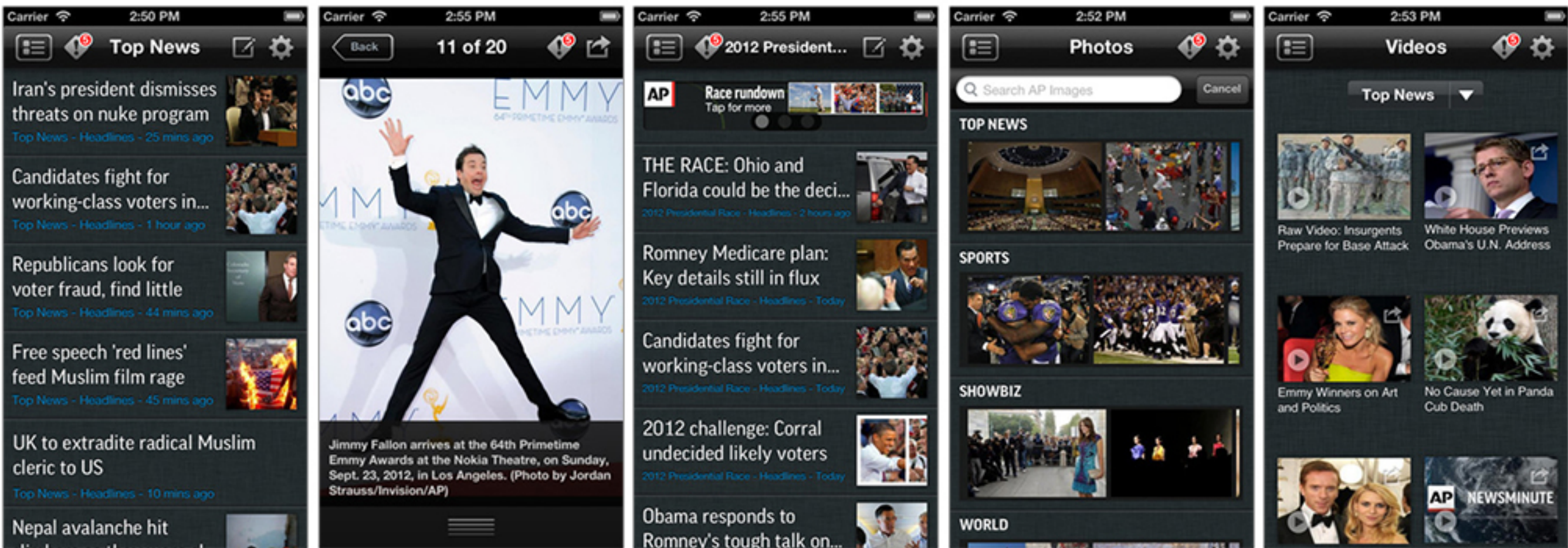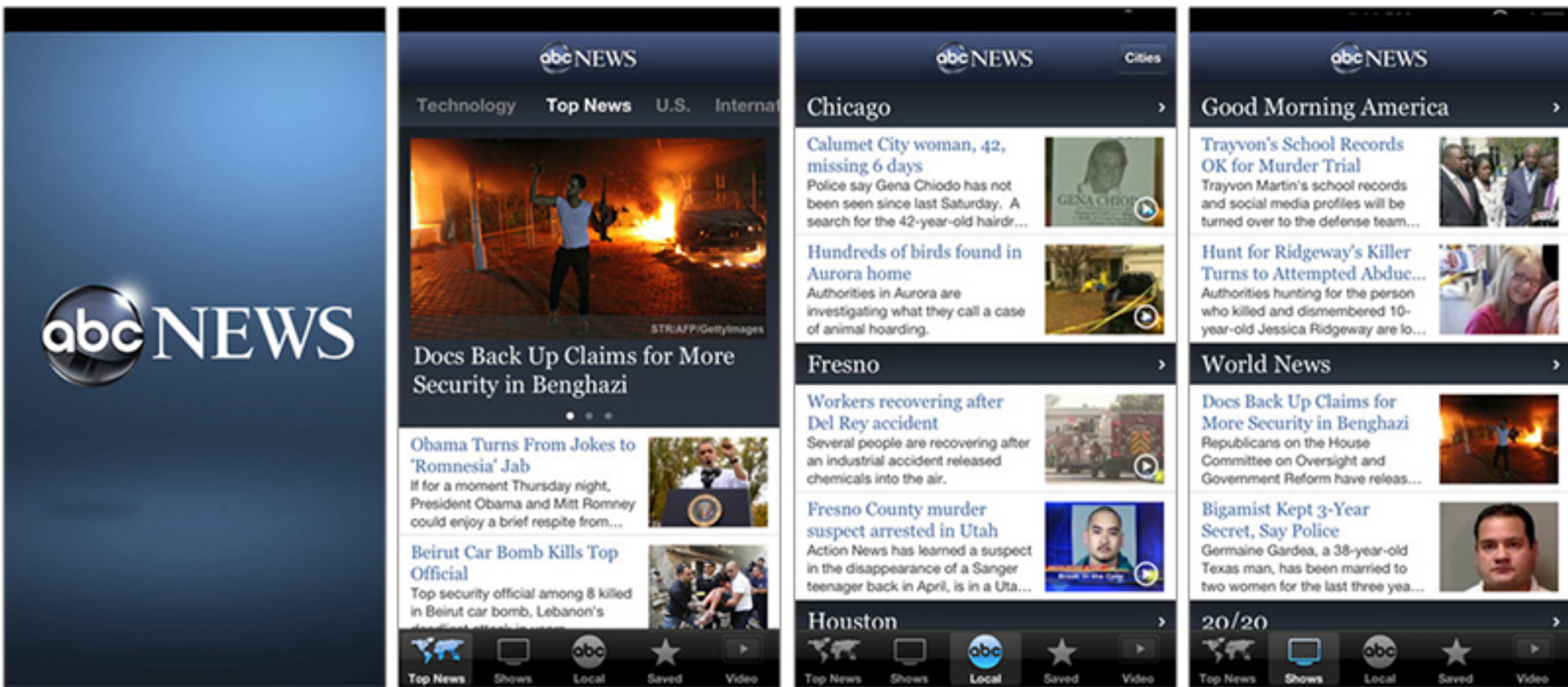
ABC News (top row) and AP News (bottom row)

ABC News

AP (Associated Press)

ABC News and AP (Associated Press) both seem to have a similar look and feel for a broadcast news platform. The broadcast news apps seem to feature more photos as a allusions to rich media like video to give it a more modern and fast-paced feel. I think the ABC News app is particular successful in its use of high-contrast dividers to separate major news sections and within each section clearly delineate subheads in a brighter accent color paired with charcoal grey.

I think their information architecture is well defined in their tab bars. Like NYTimes, they also feature "Saved" section for content sections geared for personalization, and "Top News" to access key information for quick reads. Since they are primarily broadcast news-based, they have tab bar buttons pointing to shows and video content.

Featured above may be noteworthy idea for another photo gallery presentation idea to showcase intriguing photos separated by section headers so that visitors get a sense of context. Photo- and image-friendly sections that don't require much understanding of the context or may be entertaining on its own may include images of sports, art, local activities in the city, food , etc. Like most broadcast news platforms and video- and photo-centric pages in some newspapers like NYTimes and Washington Post, the background tends to be dark to better frame photos and videos. Boston Globe may want to highlight photos and videos in image galleries in dark backrouns for image and event immersion.