

Revolutionary storytelling: 18daysinEgypt.com



By [Theresa Mallinson](#)

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Over the last while there's been a something of rallying cry for Africans to tell their own stories. But all too often proponents are more in love with discussing the idea than figuring out practical ways to make it happen. 18 Days in Egypt, a start-up that focuses on documenting the revolution, is turning the concept into a reality - and, moreover, using an innovative, collaborative digital platform to do so.

Just over a year ago, you'd have been hard-pressed to find a news channel that wasn't broadcasting real-time footage of the Egyptian revolution. And much of the footage shown on the big networks portrayed protesters documenting the revolution for themselves with their cameras or cellphones. But what happened to all of those photos and videos? Many of the photos are on Facebook or Flickr, the videos on YouTube and, save a tiny percentage that have gone viral, were probably destined to be viewed only by a small group of friends or family. That is until documentary filmmaker Jigar Mehta and creative technologist Yasmin Elayat stepped in.

The pair are co-founders of start-up 18 Days in Egypt - a crowd-sourced digital media experiment that runs off a custom-built platform called GroupStream. It's a little like Storify, but more collaborative. The aim is to create a web documentary focusing on the events from 25 January until 11 February 2011 - the 18 days it took for Hosni Mubarak to be toppled from power, using material sourced from both professional and citizen journalists.

Anyone can sign up for a profile on 18 Days in Egypt, via their existing Facebook, Twitter, Google, Yahoo or Open ID account. It's preferable to link your profile to as many different social-media accounts as possible, which will give you more options when it comes to uploading your own material. Once you've created your profile, it's time to start creating stories, or 'streams', as 18 Days in Egypt prefers to call them. To create a stream, you need to specify a date, location (which is referenced via Google maps), which friends, if any, you'd like to collaborate with; and then it's time to start uploading pictures, text and videos. If you've linked your Facebook and Twitter accounts, you can even look back to your statuses or tweets on a certain day, and throw them into the mix.

Read the [full story](#) on www.dailymaverick.co.za.

ABOUT THERESA MALLINSON

Theresa Mallinson has lived and worked as an itinerant writer, subeditor and sometimes teacher, plying her trade in such exotic destinations as Vaduz, Dubai, and Cape Town. But that's all changed since she became a journalist at the Daily Maverick (www.thedailymaverick.co.za) and managing editor at Free African Media. For now, she's very happy to be living in Jozi. Follow her on Twitter at [@tcmallinson](#) and contact her on theresa.mallinson@gmail.com

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