The home page of a news website is composed of news snippets that build the entry point to whole news stories. In this manner, home pages are comparable to classic title pages of newspapers: the importance of reported news topics is reflected by how long the snippets are present on the home page, their position and area on the page. These aspects develop in the course of time and describe the importance and characteristics of news stories: While unexpected breaking news such as natural disasters immediately reach the top of the home page, other topics like elections will emerge over several months.

For major news websites, the Internet Archive provides multiple crawls during the day which allows to generate a set of home page versions of a single website. In a first step, these home page versions have to be divided into single news snippets together with selected features like the time stamp, position and area. Having grouped these snippets into common news stories, the selected features enable to rate the impact and importance of news stories retrospectively.