1 THE MULTIMEDIA MINDSET

The way news is gathered and delivered is evolving just as rapidly as audience expectations, technological changes and job descriptions for journalists. In this chapter, we take a look at what it means to be a journalist today and why you'll need to quickly develop your own multimedia mindset.

WTMJ-TV reporter Brandon Rook's story for the day first surfaced on Facebook. In the aftermath of a shooting on the north side of Milwaukee, one of the victims posted his status with a photo of his bullet-ridden car.

"That thing blew up on social. It had hundreds of shares and comments," Rook said. "We have a web/social team that's always looking for things like this and they said, 'We want you to find this guy.'"

Rook started by sending a message to the source on Facebook, being sensitive to the situation.

"You have a job to do, but you have to be smart with your words, so I always identify myself as a reporter. I wrote, 'We came across your post and I'm sorry this happened to you; would you be willing to talk about it?'"

Rook also reached out to the Milwaukee police to see if they could confirm the details of the Facebook post, and in 15 minutes he had information on multiple cars shot up and one home targeted. Just as important, he had a street name.

Using his smartphone to continue corresponding with the man on Facebook, he and a photographer drove to the street and started looking for broken glass, bullet holes and people to interview. He found one mother at home, but she was afraid to talk on camera, so Rook left her his card and asked her to call him when she was ready. Eventually, he found the house that had been hit by the bullets and the woman inside agreed to an interview.

"We find out this is the second time this house has been targeted, confirm that with police and now we have a story," Rook said. "Now we're talking to a mother of four whose home has been targeted twice."

Rook and the photographer did the reporting, the editing and went live from the field at 6 o'clock that night. As for the man on Facebook? He never agreed to talk or authorize the use of the pictures from his post, so Rook's station didn't use them. Though listening to the audience on social media sparked the story and technology facilitated its production,

it was good old-fashioned ethical and methodical journalism that ultimately put Rook's story on the air.

"You have to knock on doors, be a human, be sincere," Rook said. "A lot of people are skeptical about media. You have to build their trust to allow you to tell their stories."

Today's journalist has to incorporate more sources, newsgathering tools and distribution options than ever before, but the journalism fundamentals remain unchanged and essential.

MULTIMEDIA BASICS

It's hard to spend any time studying journalism without reading or hearing the following terms—*multimedia, convergence, cross-platform,* or *multiplatform journalism.* Continual advances in communications technology have forced journalists to come up with a new language to describe their storytelling. For the most part, this text uses the terms interchangeably to describe the practice of communicating complementary information on more than one media platform.

A New Approach

If a television reporter and photographer go out to cover a high school football game, they might begin their coverage using Twitter to report on the game as it plays out and post still photos or video clips to the website and mobile app. They'll probably shoot far more video of the game and gather a great deal more information than they'll need to tell their story on the eleven o'clock news, so they may write a new version for the morning show and post online some of the unused video and key statistics from the game. That's multimedia journalism. They would be using more than one media platform—television, social media, mobile and the web—and the information they broadcast would be complemented by the unique, additional information posted online, through the mobile app or in various social media.

"The most compelling way to tell stories in the digital age," says Frank Mungeam, vice president for digital content at Tegna, "is an all-day story experience that starts with social engagement, that gives updates on digital,

TABLE 1.1 ■ Average Time Spent per Day with Major Media by U.S. Adults, 2017	
	hrs:mins
	2017
Digital	**5:50**
—Desktop/laptop**	2:08
—Mobile(nonvoice)	3:14
—Other connected devices	0:28
TV*	**4:04**
Radio*	**1:26**
Print*	**0:25**
Other*	**0:21**
Total	**12:07**

Note: ages 18+; time spent with each medium includes all time spent with that medium, regardless of multitasking; for example, 1 hour of multitasking on desktop/laptop while watching TV is counted as 1 hour for TV and 1 hour for desktop/laptop; *excludes digital; **includes all internet activities on desktop and laptop computers.

Source: "Average Time Spent per Day with Major Media by US Adults," *eMarketer,* September 1, 2017, http://www.emarketer.com/Chart/Average-Time-Spent-per-Day-with-Major-Media-by-US-Adults-2017-hrsmins/206481.

context on broadcast, and then offers extras as a digital follow up, and then continues with a social conversation—and then you repeat that cycle."[1]

The fact that multimedia allows you to communicate more information in new and different ways gets many journalists jazzed about the concept, whether they've been in the business for years or are just starting out.

KNOW AND TELL
A NEW TYPE OF JOURNALIST

Source: Photo courtesy of Margaret Ann Morgan.

Margaret Ann Morgan got a job right out of school, working as an MMJ—a multimedia journalist—for the Raycom-owned station WDAM in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Her reporting day begins before she even gets out of bed.

"As my alarm blares to wake me up before I'm ready each morning, my other hand is reaching for my cell phone to check Twitter," Morgan said. "It's the way I check what happened around the world while I was asleep and what the big stories of the day will be, as well as what my viewers are tweeting about."

Morgan says that by the time she walks into the morning news meeting, she's well versed on what's happening in her viewing area. She's already exchanged e-mails with local law enforcement, made calls to city officials and looked for what's trending locally in social media.

"After the morning meeting, I hit the ground running from one story to another. Working alone as an MMJ can be exhausting at times, but it makes the final product much easier to create when there is no one in the line of communication between you and your subject. From lining up the story to setting up the equipment, conducting the interview and editing the package, everything is done on my own, which also means I am solely responsible for the end product."

Throughout the day, Morgan shares what's she's learning about her stories via social media.

"I make posts on both Facebook and Twitter, but it is important to keep in mind the different audiences on each. Twitter is very helpful in giving immediate updates, especially during breaking news. It is also a great tool to interact with followers, as well as gain credibility among officials who also have a presence on Twitter. Facebook, on the other hand, is a way to expand on issues, as well as include viewers in the conversation."

Of course, Morgan is a multimedia reporter, so the day doesn't end when her first package hits the air.

"I also have to break that 90-second package into a 30-second V/O-SOT, one version for the 10:00 show and another that advances the story for the morning show. After that, I put the script into AP form for the web and attach the video along with it."

Morgan says being an MMJ is very demanding, but it's the reality for a lot of reporters and one she's learned to appreciate.

"There are many benefits to working alone in a fast-paced newsroom. You learn how to do it all, from shooting to editing to writing. MMJs are, in my opinion, the greatest asset to a newsroom. You can do the job of three or four different people, but it only takes one of you! These positions are in high demand, but it should also be a position that is embraced by the journalist, simply for the freedom and leadership it gives you in the newsroom and in the field."

Audience First

Most news consumers aren't content to get their news and information in one form—the same individual may routinely use mobile, social media, television, text and online sources to get information from newscasts, podcasts, articles and tweets. In fact, according to research, people spend more than 12 hours a day with some form of media, and much of that time is spent multitasking.[2]

Though it's always been important for journalists to keep the audience top of mind, it's now even more critical because the platform used to deliver the news will affect what the audience gets out of it. As you begin to work on any story, you should be asking yourself what the best way is to deliver the information, what questions the audience will have and what answers you can provide.

Let's say there is major flooding in your community. Some may first learn about the rising waters from social media, but many won't stop there. Some people will tune in to a television newscast to see the impact of the flooding, how some of the worst-hit neighborhoods are being affected, as well as the weather forecast for the next few hours. At the same time, the audience may be sharing their own pictures of flooded-out roads and going online to read and add their own comments to a live blog detailing which shelters take pets and which don't. The audience for the next day's paper will likely be looking for the big picture—did emergency preparation pay off, or how did this latest flooding compare with previous floods? Multimedia journalists will be thinking about all of these possibilities as they work on their individual stories; they will look for opportunities to use the tools of multimedia to access many different sources and provide many different pieces of information to several different audiences on multiple media platforms.

MEDIA ON DEMAND

In addition to having access to multiple news delivery systems, we obviously live in an "on-demand" world. News consumers expect to get information when and how they want it—not on a timetable set by a television station or a newspaper operation. For a journalist, that means getting into a 24/7 mindset. Instead of focusing all of your attention on one story that will air at 6 p.m. or appear above the fold in tomorrow's newspaper, you need to be thinking about the audience that's out there right now, hungry for information as soon as it's been verified and vetted.

It's quite likely that you will work, or perhaps you already work, for a newsroom that breaks stories in social media or sends text alerts directly to people using mobile devices first, and then worries about traditional content delivery platforms such as television or print. In the flooding example mentioned earlier, the multimedia journalist may first focus on getting the latest information out on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram before writing a brief text version of the story to be posted online or for the mobile app along with raw video. All of that would happen before he or she begins putting together a more traditional TV story for the 5 p.m. news.

The Multimedia Industry

More and more communications companies are taking a "reach the consumers wherever they are" approach to providing information and content. ESPN, for example, is a multimedia powerhouse. From its cable TV channels to its text magazine to its mobile apps and website, the company has become synonymous with sports information by reaching out to sports consumers wherever they can be found.

The Food Network is another big multimedia player. What started out as a cable TV channel expanded to the web, began publishing a successful printed magazine, hosts a recipe aggregator site called Food.com and has more than 24 million fans on Facebook.

Local news organizations are also taking advantage of multimedia, of course. At Fox Carolina News in Greenville, South Carolina, news director Kelly Boan says they've been purposefully growing their web and social teams over the years. "The more we add on, the more we are able to serve people and bring them better journalism and news about what's going on in their community," Boan said. "We can't cram it all on air, but we can put everything we have online." Digital platforms have given stations the ability to do longer format stories. Documents obtained through a FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) request can easily be put online. "That's relatively simple, but very valuable."

Part of the push toward multiple platforms is also based on a survival instinct, according to Letitia Walker, news director at KATC-TV in Lafayette, Louisiana.

"Back in 2006, I would have never predicted we would be relying so heavily on social media, but now I don't see us in a traditional 5, 6, 10 o'clock newscast culture in the future," Walker said. "How do we get the younger millennial viewers? We get to them in a fashion that we don't do now, and that forces me to do things like signing up for Snapchat to try to understand what's coming next."

Multimedia Journalists

Increasingly, strong news organizations are looking to hire journalists who fully understand this need to give consumers more ways to access information and more control over how they do it. KATC is now creating blended positions that require more multimedia skills.

KHOU 11 News Houston ● @KHOU · 4h
Today, power was being cut off to homes with water in them in a W. Houston mandatory evacuation zone bit.ly/2x2I4xL #Harvey

○ 3   ↻ 36   ♡ 34   ✉

When flooding from Hurricane Harvey devastated the Houston area, KHOU and many other news outlets relied on social media to get information out immediately, well before the first stories appeared on the air or on the station's website.

Source: Twitter/ @KHOU.

"My (assignment) desk person is in charge of posting to social and posting to the web," Walker said. "We have three assignment editors on the desk at a time, and all three have to have all those skills."

Updating a story continuously on Twitter obviously requires a much different type of writing than the web story at the end of the day. So news managers like Walker want journalists who understand how the gathering and presentation of content change as the distribution of that content differs. Their writers have to know how to change their styles, depending on whether they are writing the tweet or the web version of the story. In other words, as the medium changes, the best journalists will be versatile enough to know how the message should change as well.

KNOW AND TELL
THE PROCESS OF NEWS

Technology has changed everything about the news business, from the way it's delivered to the way journalists do their jobs. Television reporters used to spend most of the day producing a complete package for the main newscast, with a live shot or two thrown in along the way. Not anymore.

"In today's world of journalism, you simply have to make 30 hours fit into a 24-hour day," says WIBW-TV anchor Melissa Brunner. "We still need to put a quality product on the air, but you also must incorporate social media and your website in general into your daily routine."

The station's management expects everyone on the news staff to share information on stories all day long. The television story is no longer the ultimate goal; it's part of a process of reporting and sharing that begins well before the newscast.

Brunner says that philosophy has changed everything in the newsroom. "When breaking news happens, you can't simply send a crew out the door and forget it," she says. "You must get the crew out the door, tweet/Facebook the information, send a text alert, send a desktop alert and get a story on the website."

Constant sharing carries some risks, of course. Information the station puts out early on may turn out to be wrong and that puts the responsibility on everyone who works there to acknowledge it when new information changes what's been previously reported.

Source: Photo courtesy of the authors.

TECHNOLOGY CHANGES CONTENT

Media are evolving so quickly that within a few years, we'll probably be delivering news and information in ways we haven't even imagined yet. The word *podcast* wasn't in anyone's vocabulary until 2004; within a year, thousands of podcasts were available online. And who could have imagined how quickly Twitter would take off as a newsgathering and dissemination tool following its use in the 2009 Iranian election protests? Live reporting now takes nothing more than a smartphone and a Facebook account, and there are dozens of free tools available allowing journalists to create interactive graphics with no knowledge of coding.

The concept of considering the best way to present content based on the delivery method goes far beyond the obvious differences, such as the fact that television news uses sound and video and a newspaper does not. It means that journalists must think about how they can provide useful information to people in all sorts of different ways. The presentation will obviously be different for a tweet, a podcast, a newspaper article or an online story and so will the content, because consumers using those media want different things. Your Twitter followers may want nothing more than the story's headline and a photo, a radio listener might want a brief summary with sound bites, a newspaper reader might want more details and an online news consumer might want to see the documents that underpin the story. Journalists have to know what elements they need to collect so they can effectively present news and information to consumers in all these media.

In addition, the best multimedia journalists will stay on top of changes in communications technology. For example, the increase in the number of people with high-speed internet connections is at least partly responsible for changing the thinking about the use of video and elaborate graphics online. Before high-speed connections were common, many news organizations hesitated to post multiple video clips and to create high-level, interactive graphics because the download time for people on dial-up connections made those features nearly impossible to use. Even more recently, the explosion in the number of people with mobile communication devices—from smartphones to tablets—has fundamentally changed the way journalists handle breaking news. Now, those looking ahead to the future are wondering how audiences may be able to actually experience the news through the use of virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR).

For example, the New York Times used VR to tell the stories of three of the 30 million children who have been forced from their homes by war. According to the description posted to YouTube, "The Displaced" is an example of "a brand new kind of video that gives you a sense of depth in every direction so you feel like you're actually there."[3]

These are just a couple of examples of the ways in which the development and increasing use of new technologies are having an impact on the way journalists do their jobs. We talk more about this phenomenon throughout the text.

Good Journalism Matters

Journalism is ripe with opportunity for storytellers, and learning how to take a multimedia approach to stories gives you the potential to reach a more diverse group of people with more news and information.
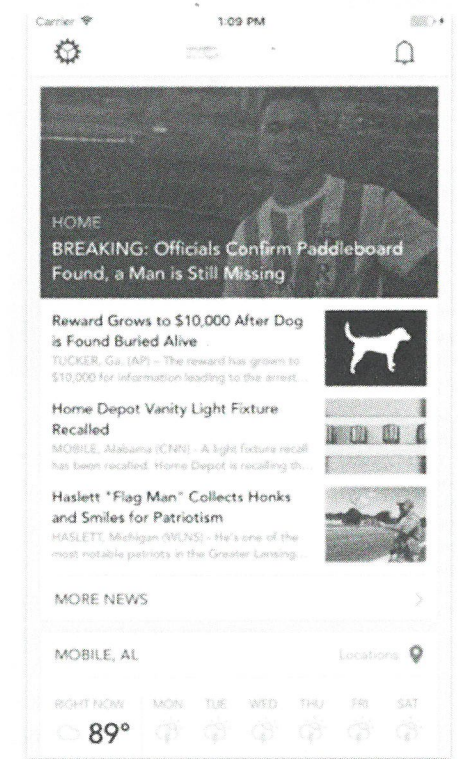
WKRG-TV in Mobile, Alabama, was one of the first local stations to develop a mobile app. The news managers understood that technology is changing news delivery systems, too. As more people stay informed through mobile devices, journalists like those at WKRG must adjust to more immediate deadlines and develop new storytelling forms.

Source: WKRG, News 5 in Mobile, Alabama. Screen grab from mobile app (accessed September 3, 2017).

The technology necessary to experience virtual reality can now be found in most people's pockets. That's paved the way for the New York Times and other news organizations to bring viewers to locations or to understand issues they may never experience in person.

Source: nytimes.com Captured September 3, 2017 https://www .nytimes.com/video/ magazine/10000000 5005806/the-displaced.html? mcubz=3.

Still, it's important to remember that good journalism skills are universal—smart reporting and strong writing apply to all platforms. As the technology used to manage the content becomes easier to navigate, multimedia journalism is likely to become less about knowing how to post a story or use a smartphone to capture video and more about the skills it takes to gather and present information that is relevant and compelling to an audience—regardless of whether that audience is watching, reading or interacting with the story. As Mike Wendland, who has covered technology for both the Detroit Free Press and NBC, puts it, "Our skill set as storytellers will be more in demand than ever."

In addition, adherence to journalism's best practices and ethical codes remains essential. As the speed increases and the methods of dissemination vary, your journalism must be sounder than ever. Your reputation and that of your news organization are only as strong as your credibility, so just because technology allows you to do something does not mean it's something you should do. For example, you may be able to post a horrific 911 tape on the web, but you should still ask yourself about the journalistic purpose of posting that audio before taking advantage of the option.

ETHICS IN ACTION
CODES AND PRINCIPLES

Of course, good journalism is also ethical, and at a time when the term "fake news" is used by some to label everything published that they don't agree with, it is more important than ever for journalists to make the most ethical decisions possible. Most news organizations, regardless of platform, support the Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics:

1. Seek truth and report it. Journalists should be honest, fair and courageous in gathering, reporting and interpreting information.

2. Minimize harm. Ethical journalists treat sources, subjects and colleagues as human beings deserving of respect.

3. Act independently. Journalists should be free of obligation to any interest other than the public's right to know.

4. Be accountable. Journalists are accountable to their readers, listeners, viewers and each other.[4]

The no. 1 principle to seek truth is at the foundation of all journalism ethics. Journalists should always strive to report the most accurate version of a story possible. At the same time, we must take into account the impact of our work on the people we cover, free ourselves as much as possible from internal or external influences, and always be willing to explain our actions to the communities we serve. Though you may not convince your viewer or reader that you made an ethical choice, you must at least be able to explain how you reached your decision.

On the surface, it may not look so difficult to abide by these principles. But often the principles themselves are in conflict. Journalists who seek the truth may discover information that will be hurtful to the family of a person involved in wrongdoing. A reporter's membership in a nongovernmental organization may permit that reporter to learn more about issues the group is involved with, but that membership may also compromise the reporter's independence and be difficult to justify to the audience. In many cases, making an ethical decision means choosing not between right and wrong but between right and right.

The Power of Multimedia

Never before have journalists had so many storytelling tools with which to work. When you can take advantage of broadcast's powerful sound and imagery, text's depth and detail, online media's interactivity, social media's reach, as well as mobile's ubiquity, you have the potential to reach more people with more of an impact. The key for today's journalists is to find a way to report information in the medium that works best for each individual news consumer.
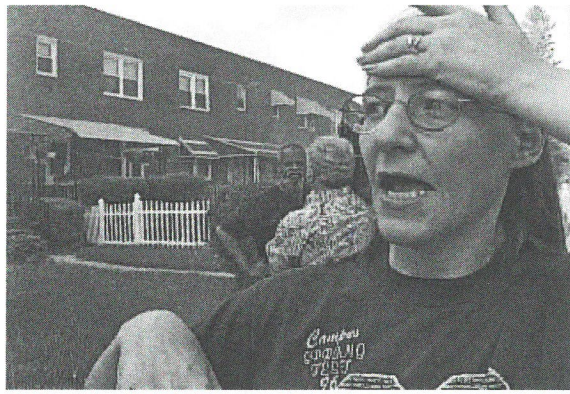
In the most progressive newsrooms, journalists have the potential to do a better job of telling stories because they can now show, tell and invite the audience to interact with the information. For the rest of this chapter, we explore what broadcast, text, online, social and mobile media do best to give you the foundation you'll need to develop powerful multimedia stories.

GO ONLINE

Ongoing Story Module: Read the assignment and begin thinking about the reporting you could do for this multimedia story.

THE BEST OF BROADCAST

Ask people where they got their coverage of a presidential campaign and they will likely mention watching television news. A study by the Pew Research Center found 48 percent of people it polled were primarily following the news surrounding the 2016 election on television.[5] TV technology allows broadcast journalists to present history as it happens. Television journalists can combine words, sound and pictures to create a sense of being there for the viewer. A great broadcast storyteller can make you feel like you know the person being interviewed, like you've been to the location being showcased or that you were at the event yourself. So, when you begin to plan a multimedia story, you need to keep the strengths of broadcast journalism in mind.

Some of the best broadcast journalism allows the audience to share in the experience of others. In a story about a home explosion and fire in Baltimore, WBFF-TV viewers could hear and see for themselves how neighbors reacted.

Source: WBFF-TV video courtesy of Stan Heist.

On the Scene

Television and radio news are able to let viewers watch or hear events as they occur or to report on them within minutes, or even seconds, after they happen. Though social media, mobile and the web also allow for immediacy, live trucks, satellite uplinks and even smartphones allow radio and television journalists to broadcast directly from the scene of breaking news events, showing viewers how big a fire is or taking them inside a courtroom to hear a judge read out a verdict in real time. For example, when Hurricane Harvey hit Houston, Texas, CNN reporter Ed Lavandera rode in a boat with a volunteer searching for people trapped in their homes by rising floodwaters. CNN broadcast the rescue of a woman and her elderly parents, showing exactly how serious the situation was in some parts of the city.

Though video consumption on other platforms is exploding, most live video viewing still takes place on television. But this ability to disseminate information instantly or extremely quickly comes with risks. It is always better to be right than first and wrong, so "going live" or "getting on the air with the information" should be secondary to checking the facts.

Impact of Visuals and Emotion

Great journalists in all media are able to convey emotion and create pictures in the reader's mind through their writing, but broadcast journalists have an edge when it comes to this kind of reporting. Through the use of sound and video, broadcasters can actually let viewers hear the mother's plea or see how swollen the river is at flood stage. TV journalists must still use words effectively to explain or supplement the video, but there is no substitute for great pictures combined with strong writing.

For example, WBBH-TV in Ft. Myers, Florida, covered vast brush fires that were eating up thousands of acres in Collier County, a key part of the station's coverage area. In one story, a multimedia journalist showed the impact of the fire on a family-owned dog kennel. In his video, we saw flames just a few yards away from the dogs and their cages as the owner of the kennel started opening the cage doors and urging the dogs to get out and run. The video of her frantically trying to save the animals and calling out, "Get out of here, go, go!" was one of the most powerful moments in the newscast—one that likely affected viewers in a way that few other stories did that day.

Again, this ability comes with responsibility. There will be pictures that are too graphic to use and sound that's too disturbing to hear. For example, some stations have policies against airing "moment of death" video or audio. If they get pictures of a fatal car crash as it's occurring or if officials release a 911 recording of a woman being beaten to death, these stations refuse to air the content. They believe the story can still be told without these potentially disturbing elements. Good journalists must always weigh the storytelling benefit against any potential harm the story might cause. We talk more about the ethical use of visuals in Chapters 8 and 10.

Audience Connection

Part of the reason broadcast news has been so successful is that it is the medium in which a person is actually telling a story to the audience. Viewers make a personal connection with anchors and reporters. That may be one reason why so many newscasts begin or end with the statement, "Thank you for watching." Broadcasters realize that many people in the audience do feel as if they are inviting the newscasters into their homes, and that invitation comes with certain expectations.
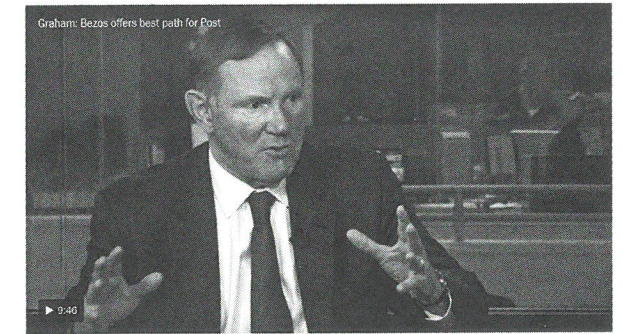
"When is the last time a newspaper thanked its readers?" asks Michele Godard, general manager at KALB-TV in Alexandria, Louisiana. "As subtle as this seems, it works its way into viewers' mind[s] and they feel a greater stake in our lives."

Before she became the boss, Godard was one of the station's primary anchors, and her experience convinced her that television stations have an enhanced personal connection with the viewers. "When I was the evening news anchor, I was pregnant twice," Godard said. "Do you know people still stop me in the street and sigh when they see how big my kids are? They chart their lives by the ups and downs of ours." For Godard, the connection works both ways. "I can tell you that as a result of the very personal connection I feel with our viewers I tend to take the information we provide more seriously," she said. "When our anchors read a story about a murder, I immediately wonder who the person was. Did that man or woman ever stop me in the store and ask about my children? It drives me to be more vigilant."

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, and online interactivity such as the comments section or the reader ranking options following many stories, have made it easier for newspapers and online news organizations to create audience connections, as well. But good television newscasts continue to provide the audience with important information presented in a compelling manner. That can include anchors and reporters who are good communicators, graphics that help better explain the stories and even music that helps set the mood or tone of a story.

In 2013, Amazon.com founder Jeff Bezos purchased a financially challenged Washington Post for $250 million. In his first interview about the purchase he said, "We've had three big ideas at Amazon that we've stuck with for 18 years, and they're the reason we're successful: Put the customer first. Invent. And be patient," he said. "If you replace 'customer' with 'reader,' that approach, that point of view, can be successful at The Post, too."[6]

Source: washingtonpost.com. Captured April 18, 2018. https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/washington-post-to-be-sold-to-jeff-bezos/2013/08/05/ca537c9e-fe0c-11e2-9711-3708310f6f4d_story.html?utm_term=.d61e7c0c55bd.

THE POWER OF TEXT

Newspapers have a long and illustrious history in the United States. When the framers of the U.S. Constitution included the guarantee of press freedom, they understood that the dominant news medium of the time—newspapers—played a fundamental role in preserving the country's democracy. But newspapers are in crisis in America—advertising dollars and readership are declining, and that's translated into fewer newspapers and fewer jobs.

Even so, newspapers still cover local communities in far more depth than any other medium. The Project for Excellence in Journalism conducted a study that looked at all the local news outlets in Baltimore for one week. It found that newspapers accounted for 48 percent of the original reporting in the market, followed by local TV with a little more than 30 percent.[7]

Newspapers also do much of the great investigative reporting in this country, and some of that may be attributed to the strengths of the medium. As you work on planning your multimedia stories, you'll want to remember the following text attributes.

Depth

In general, most newspaper articles are longer than the broadcast version of the same story. For example, the "CBS Evening News" once did a story about a new treatment for asthma sufferers. The Washington Post reported the same story the next day. The CBS News story was approximately 2:00 long. When, in an experiment, the Washington Post story was read aloud by a local TV news anchor, it was more than twice (4:40) as long.

The essential elements of the story were reported by both news organizations, but the newspaper story included more background on the Food and Drug Administration's approval process for the drug, more information about how much the drug might cost and why it might not be right for everyone. The added depth would have made the story particularly relevant to someone considering using the drug.

Detail

Detail can simply mean adding more specifics. For example, many text stories will include the age of a subject, the middle initial of an interviewee and specific numbers instead of a rounded figure. This additional detail can help in terms of ensuring accuracy and understanding. If someone's name is Peter Smith, then reporting on "Peter E. Smith, 52, of Mountain Lake, Virginia," makes it far less likely that someone will think the story refers to 19-year-old Peter W. Smith who lives in Richmond.

Since newspapers can't rely on video to convey information, television journalists writing text stories must be sure to incorporate significant details from the video into the text. Using the example of the fire threatening the kennel in Florida, the text version of the story might have included a paragraph like this:

> With the flames less than 10 yards away from the dogs in their kennels, Atwell started unlocking the cage doors one by one. With tears streaming down her face and a voice hoarse from inhaling smoke, Atwell pulled the dogs out, pointed them away from the fire and shouted, "Get out of here, go, go!"

Without video to help set the scene, the writer for text must be more specific about the nearness of the fire and must describe what the subject is doing and how she looks and sounds in order for the reader to fully experience the drama of the moment.

The risk of including too much depth and detail is that you bog the story down or make it boring and unreadable, but most television journalists writing text stories easily avoid that trap.

Reader Experience

Ask avid newspaper readers why they like newspapers and many will mention the fact that they like the reading experience better in text than they do with digital devices. The combination of portability and permanence in a newspaper allows you to take the paper with you without worrying about connectivity or power, and you can easily reread something that you didn't get the first time without having to scroll up and down to find your starting point. These characteristics are important for those planning multimedia stories to consider: Content that you think the audience may want to hold on to for any length of time might best be presented in text.

THE ORIGINALITY OF ONLINE

According to the Pew Research Center, 43 percent of people often go online for news, and that percentage includes the web, social media and apps. Looking at Figure 1.1, you'll notice television news still leads as a source of news when cable, network and local are combined, but the gap has narrowed substantially.

FIGURE 1.1 ■ TV News Dominates, but Online News Consumption Grows

Gap between television and online news consumption narrows from 2016

% of U.S. adults who often get news on each platform
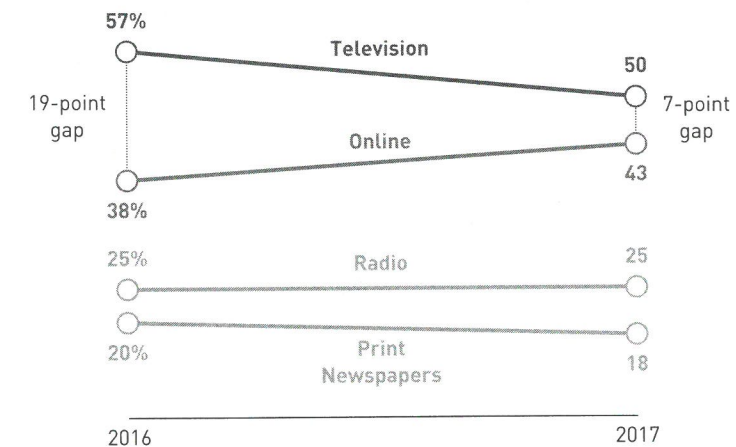
Source: "Americans' online news use is closing in on TV news use," Pew Research Center, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/09/07/americans-online-news-use-vs-tv-news-use/ (accessed December 5, 2017).

Most likely when you turn to the web for information, you go in search of something specific. You may choose to get news online because you don't want to wait for the nightly news or for the next day's paper. According to Pew, online news is valued most for headlines and convenience, not detailed, in-depth reporting. This "getting the information you want when you want it" is one of three key strengths of online journalism.

On Demand

With traditional broadcast and print media, the news consumer is essentially at the mercy of those who select what information to air or publish and when. In the online world, if the information is posted somewhere, the savvy internet user can usually find it. Even if the information will be included in a broadcast and in the newspaper eventually, if it's also online, the user does not have to wait to access the information on someone else's timetable.

CBS News, for example, streams stories from its nightly newscast on the web to gain viewers who can't or don't want to watch the broadcast during the time slots it airs on television. Lacking a cable channel like NBC has in MSNBC, CBS also created a 24/7 digital streaming service. It's available online and on the network's mobile app. Like many other news outlets, CBS is trying to capture audience whenever it is available.

The web also provides access to more information than could ever be aired in a single television program or published in a single newspaper. The "bottomless news hole" of the web creates an opportunity to satisfy news consumers who want more than what the traditional media can offer.

Interactivity

Online media give journalists the opportunity to ask the audience to do more than passively read or watch a story—online users can be invited to explore information on their own, add perspectives to the storytelling or literally try something for themselves. This may be the real key to making multimedia stories powerful.

For example, you may be working on a story about restaurants that don't meet state health standards. You will only be able to include a limited number of restaurants in your broadcast or text story, but if you add an online component, you can give users access to the entire restaurant report database so they can search for their favorite restaurants' ratings on their own. You could ask users to add their own restaurant horror stories or invite customer reviews of popular restaurants. If you have a creative online production team, you might work with the health department to create an interactive inspection game. The game might use a series of photos of a typical restaurant kitchen and ask users to spot the violations that health inspectors have set up for the purpose of this teaching tool.

Innovation

As you can see, the online medium allows us to combine the best of text and broadcast in innovative ways. Often journalists who don't understand the technical side of the web are afraid to brainstorm the online component of a multimedia story because they don't

know what's possible. The secret is to think from an audience perspective: How can I present the information in a way that's most helpful to the user's understanding? How can I make exploring this issue fun for the user? How can I find out what the user already knows or wants to know about this story?

When the Richmond Times-Dispatch was working on content to help commemorate the anniversary of the 1965 Selma civil rights march, one of the reporters involved discovered something called the Alabama Literacy Test. Blacks in Alabama had to take the test in order to vote, but the questions were so difficult that almost no one—white or black—would have been able to pass. The web producers posted a series of the test questions, which helped people understand the type of discrimination that blacks were facing at the time.

Sometimes you will want to create unique content but you may not have the technical support to do exactly what you want. Even so, you'll be surprised how much you can accomplish if you can get people excited about a good interactive idea.

GO ONLINE

Module 1: Test what you know about the strengths of each medium with our interactive game.

THE SOCIAL AND MOBILE ADVANTAGE

Social and mobile news consumption has exploded in recent years and the two have become synonymous in many ways. Researchers found that 89 percent of people in the United States with mobile devices use them to access news, and a significant portion of that news consumption is via content posted on social media. In fact, time spent on mobile news apps and sites has actually declined in favor of time spent accessing news through social networks.[8]

Sharing Capacity

Most multimedia journalists now use Facebook, Twitter or another social network to do incremental reporting—essentially, reporting pieces of the story as they happen. These updates are designed to keep the audience engaged throughout the evolution of the story, so reporters will post photos and videos, ask questions or respond to viewers—all on their mobile devices.

The mobile audience often clicks on links found on social media networks to view the finished version of a story on a news organization's website. One local news site in Oxford, Mississippi, HottyToddy.com, routinely gets a third or more of its traffic from mobile Facebook users. The writers for the site have learned that a well-crafted Facebook post with a link to a story can triple the number of viewers for that content.

Multimedia journalists also use the combination of a smartphone and social media to monitor the news around them. They check for trending topics, follow the competition to make sure they're not missing anything and watch to see if their story sources are making relevant comments via social networks.

Audience Engagement

Social media offers news organizations and individual journalists a way to interact directly with viewers. WLS-TV in Chicago is one of the most successful TV stations in the country when it comes to engaging audiences on Facebook. The station has more than two million followers and gets tens of millions of reactions, shares and comments annually on its Facebook content. The station posts about once every 20 minutes, according to digital director Jennifer Hoppenstedt, and she sees each of those posts as an opportunity to connect with people.

"On a day-to-day, hour-to-hour basis, we make decisions on the most compelling content available and send that out to our social audience," Hoppenstedt said. "It's just about finding good content and sharing it."

Another news organization seeing tremendous success with Facebook is KLTV in Tyler, Texas. The station has more than 270,000 followers, more than the city's population of about 100,000 residents. Assistant news director Joe Terrell says people come to the station's Facebook page because they're interested in news from the area and because they know they can rely on KLTV to deliver when it matters most.

"We had major wildfires one year. They were consuming houses and we manned Facebook 24/7 for a month. We were Doppler radar for fires," Terrell said. "We built a loyal audience because we were there for them."

Both KLTV and WLS pride themselves on responding directly to viewer questions and tracking post engagement to be sure they have a solid understanding of what their audiences want and need.

Expanded Reach

Social media also gives journalism organizations an opportunity to reach people who might never otherwise come in contact with their reporting. For example, KNXV-TV in Phoenix is one of the most successful stations in the country when it comes to building audience on YouTube. Digital director Kevin Clay says the station is purposefully going after eyeballs inside and outside the market.

"You know we're clearly a Phoenix TV station and we cater to the local audience, but when we look at a digital perspective and we look at YouTube and Facebook and the others, the world is our oyster," Clay said. "We get all these national feeds, all this national content, and just because we're a Phoenix station doesn't mean that someone in Detroit or Maine or Florida wouldn't be interested in watching it when it's provided by us."

Autumn Hand, the digital video and syndication manager at E. W. Scripps Company which owns KNXV, says this is an important change in mindset for those working in local TV. "When they see that their video has engagement far outside the market, they realize its value," Hand said. "A video about any kind of conflict in Cleveland or a weird story in California, those have appeal in the U.S. and beyond, and we're going to serve that audience, too."

The ability to reach audiences far beyond the boundaries of an individual news market was first facilitated by the web and has been greatly expanded by social networks.

BBC launches daily vertical video news product
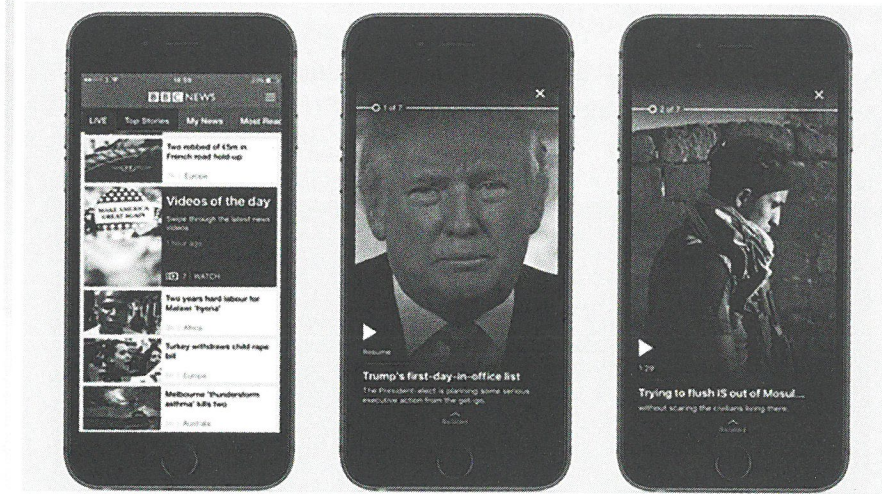
In recognition of the way many smartphone users hold their phones, the BBC developed an app with content designed to be viewed vertically in full screen, and with subtitles. More than 60 percent of BBC News' digital traffic comes via mobile devices, and the network has created a new vertical video team in recognition of changing consumption patterns.

Source: BBC.com, retrieved from http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/worldnews/2016/bbc-launches-daily-vertical-video-news-product (accessed September 3, 2017).

MULTIMEDIA ETHICS

Along with new storytelling opportunities, multiplatform journalism brings new ethical challenges. J. D. Lasica, former senior editor of the Online Journalism Review, says these can be grouped into three broad categories: gathering the news, reporting the news and presenting the news. For example, when you as a multimedia journalist are gathering the news, when is it OK to use information or images from social media? When you are presenting the news, do different standards apply to a live shot on Facebook versus one on television? Throughout this text, we will explore standards of accuracy in all media, including the issue of how corrections are handled. Plus, the line between advertising and news is often blurred even more in the online world; we look at how sponsorships and other advertising-supported content are handled across platforms.

Platform Impact

The operational differences of broadcast, online, social, mobile and print media can affect their ethical decision making. For example, TV and online media both deal with pictures and sound, but the nonlinear capability of the web lets users choose whether to click through to view a graphic photo or listen to a disturbing audio clip. Broadcast journalists can warn the audience that the pictures they're about to see may be disturbing, but a newspaper can't alert you to a potentially troubling photograph if it's published on the front page.

More questions arise when a news organization must decide if its ethical principles are uniform across platforms. If your editorial decision makers believe an image is too graphic

Why A Local News Station's Decision To Live-Stream A Potential Suicide Is Dangerous

Fox 5 in New York used Facebook to post a live video of a man threatening to jump from a bridge. Experts say this kind of coverage is irresponsible.

Christopher Mathias

TRADE TOOLS
ETHICS RESOURCES

One of the most thoughtful ethics experts we know is Bob Steele, former director of The Janet Prindle Institute for Ethics at DePauw University. He developed these 10 questions to help you reach good ethical decisions:

1. What do I know? What do I need to know?

2. What is my journalistic purpose?

3. What are my ethical concerns?

4. What organizational policies and professional guidelines should I consider?

5. How can I include other people, with different perspectives and diverse ideas, in the decision-making process?

6. Who are the stakeholders—those affected by my decision? What are their motivations? Which are legitimate?

7. What if the roles were reversed? How would I feel if I were in the shoes of one of the stakeholders?

8. What are the possible consequences of my actions? Short term? Long term?

9. What are my alternatives to maximize my truth-telling responsibility and minimize harm?

10. Can I clearly and fully justify my thinking and my decision? To my colleagues? To the stakeholders? To the public?

The simple act of asking these questions can help guide the discussion of an ethical dilemma, and help those involved reach an answer that they will feel they can defend to the audience.

At other times, it may help to access the professional codes of ethics from highly regarded journalism organizations. These URLs will take you directly to the ethics content posted on the organizations' websites:

- American Society of News Editors, "Ethics Codes": http://bit.ly/ASNE-Ethics

- Online News Association, "Social Newsgathering Ethics Code": http://bit.ly/ONAEthics

- Radio Television Digital News Association, "Code of Ethics": http://bit.ly/RTDNAEthics

- Society of Professional Journalists, "Code of Ethics": http://bit.ly/SPJEthics

All of these organizations developed their ethics codes and guidelines through years of conversations with professional journalists. Their codes are mandatory reading for anyone considering a career in journalism.

Source: Bob Steele, "Ask These 10 Questions to Make Good Ethical Decisions," Poynter.org, August 13, 2002, https://www.poynter.org/news/ask-these-10-questions-make-good-ethical-decisions (accessed December 5, 2017).

to use in the newspaper, is it OK to post it online because the user can choose to view it or not? Or do you need to have ethical policies that are consistent, no matter what medium you use to disseminate the information? These are some of the decision-making challenges you'll face as an ethical journalist in a multimedia environment.

GO ONLINE

Module 1: Examine ethics codes and other ethical decision-making resources.

FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

Although the news media are going through a sustained period of change and evolution, change itself is not new and should not be seen as a threat for journalists. It's important to remember that new media seldom, if ever, replace the old. We still read books, we still listen to the radio and we certainly still watch television; however, it's indisputable that most news media are trying to adapt to changing technologies and a news consumer culture that is more fractured than ever. No longer can you count on the fact that a majority of adults in the United States will read a daily newspaper, and no longer can you be sure that the 6 p.m. newscast will be the most critical broadcast of the day. What you can be sure of is that journalists who are skilled in the journalism basics—researching, interviewing, writing and ethics—will be able to succeed in a changing media environment if they are willing to embrace the idea that it's the story that matters.

New Opportunities

Developing a set of multimedia skills in addition to mastering the fundamentals can open many doors for journalists. Job posts for positions such as social media reporter, digital producer or engagement editor are popping up more and more frequently in journalism employment listings. In addition to jobs at sites attached to traditional mainstream news organizations, positions are available at nonprofit sites like ProPublica, which promotes investigative journalism, or online-only sites such as Vox, which is billed as an outlet for news from a liberal perspective, and then there are mobile and social-only organizations such as AJ+, which publishes video and other content directly to social platforms and through native apps on mobile devices.

These news outlets are looking for journalists who want to tell stories—regardless of platform—and those who are adept at telling stories in more than one medium are more likely to get jobs or to move up in the organizations that hire them.

New Challenges

The way journalists communicate with their audiences has fundamentally changed in the past decade and will likely continue to do so. "For a TV journalist, it was one way for so long," says KLTV's Terrell. "We'd tell 'em, 'At 6, these are the stories in this order, and you sit and you watch 'em, and I'll throw in some commercials.' It's evolved; we're not in charge anymore."

Now that audiences have more choices for news than ever before, maintaining credibility as a journalist has never been more important. In addition to an emphasis on solid newsgathering and storytelling skills, today's journalists must also have a rock-solid foundation in ethics that can help guide them in developing a lasting trust with the audiences they serve.

"The future is upon us," said Hank Price, vice president and general manager at WVTM-TV in Birmingham, Alabama. "Opportunities for journalists and media companies have never been greater. Those who survive and prosper will do so because they understand and take advantage of the critical new role played by the consumer—consumers who want to know whom they can trust for the truth."

TAKING IT HOME

It is essential for today's journalists to understand how the audience is accessing and using news and information now, as well as the ways in which the message must change as the medium changes. Capitalizing on the strengths of each media platform available to you will make you a more effective storyteller and will help ensure that your audiences get the information they need.

This text is about preparing you for jobs that are changing and jobs that have not yet even been envisioned.

"There are so many places to get news and we have so many places to be," says news director Katie Morris of KTVB-TV in Boise, Idaho. "We're not growing resources. We've been growing skills in my newsroom. I see more emerging platforms and more technology developments ahead. The good news is I feel people are consuming us more than they ever have."

And the audience will need well trained journalists regardless of where and how they get their news.

TALKING POINTS

1. Go to the Pew Research Center online (http://people-press.org) and check out the latest research on how people are using news media. What implications does the research have on the way journalists are or should be doing their jobs? Pay particular attention to the demographic breakdowns for media use. What do the data suggest to you in terms of serving a diverse audience?

2. For one 24-hour period, track your news media usage. How much time are you spending with each medium? Are there stories that you saw mentioned on more than one platform? Are there stories that were unique to one platform? Did the news organization involved do anything specific to capitalize on the power of its medium?

3. Find a good multimedia storytelling example. Whether it's a broadcast story with a web companion piece or a text article that's enhanced online or a story that uses some other combination of media platforms, analyze how the journalists involved are leveraging the platforms included in the presentation.

ETHICS CHALLENGES

1. News organizations never seem to have enough resources to cover all of the stories they'd like to tackle. If you know a story about a local celebrity will play better on social media and help drive more traffic to your web and mobile sites, do you put a reporter on that story and report the mayor's new tax proposal as a reader in your newscast and as a text story online? Or do you choose to give the more "important" story fuller treatment by assigning a reporter to the topic? How much do you let the pursuit of audience drive your coverage?

2. Social media is such an essential tool now for multimedia journalists that some news organizations have created ethics policies that outline the ways in which the journalists they employ can use social networks. The New York Times released new social media guidelines in 2017 and promptly faced criticism. Go online (http://nyti.ms/2g7aw73) to take a look at it and then ask yourself if you think it is fair or goes too far. Should journalists have a right to make personal comments on their personal social media accounts, or are they always on the job when it comes to social media?

ONLINE LEARNING MODULE 1

For chapter exercises, practice tools and additional resources, visit this chapter's online learning module at study.sagepub.com/advancingthestory. You'll find:

- SKILL BUILDING: Take a quiz to test your knowledge of the strengths of each media platform.

TALKING POINTS

1. Take a TV or radio script you've written and look for wasted words. How many words can you remove without losing the meaning or power of the story? Is the story better after you've taken those words out? Why or why not?

2. Choose a script and review it for attribution. List all the statements that include either direct or indirect attribution. Are there elements of the story that should have been attributed but

weren't? What questions would you need to have answered in order to include more attribution in the story?

3. Watch and record a local TV or radio newscast, paying close attention to the writing. Make note of what you would have changed if you'd been in charge of editing copy before air.

ETHICS CHALLENGES

1. You've done an on-camera interview with a 20-year-old high school dropout for a story about the value of a college education. As you sit down to write, the phone rings. It's the dropout, asking you to leave him out of your story because he's afraid of being fired for talking to you. What would you consider before deciding what to do?

2. Journalists obviously consult their own notes when writing, but they also review any clips they've saved while researching a story. Sometimes, they include phrases or entire sentences from those clips in their stories. Does this constitute plagiarism? How could you avoid doing this?

ONLINE LEARNING MODULE 6

For chapter exercises, practice tools and additional resources, visit this chapter's online learning module at study.sagepub.com/advancingthestory. You'll find:

- SKILL BUILDING: Practice writing focus statements of six words or fewer for some well-known movies or stories.

- DISCOVER: Read and watch two versions of the same story to see how conversational writing can add power and meaning.

- EXPLORE: Visit websites for grammar help, writing checklists and math tools.

- Also, continue your work on the ONGOING STORY. Write a focus statement and a "jot outline" for this story.

7
WRITING THE STORY
Digital

The fundamentals of good reporting, writing and ethics apply to news in all media, but to disseminate information most effectively via the web, mobile and social media, additional considerations and skills are needed. This chapter outlines some of the best practices for writing and presenting content across these digital platforms and discusses current standards for adapting broadcast stories to meet the needs of this growing audience.

"In breaking news, take a picture, send it back to the station and start tweeting," says Galean Stewart, news director at Raycom-owned WDAM-TV in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. She says the goal is to push content to social before it winds up on the web and eventually on air. Smartphones make that job much easier.

Here's how WDAM makes digital delivery a part of every reporter's day:

- Each reporter is supplied with a smartphone and is expected to use it for reporting from the field. As reporters rush out the door, equipment and coffee in hand, they are (or at least should be!) sending out a tweet and looking for opportunities to go live on Facebook to let their followers know what they are covering.

- While on the scene, several social media updates are expected, which should include both pictures and video. "The story will always dictate the number of tweets," Stewart said. "For example, you may get all the important information in one sound bite, but generally, as stories develop, you send out nuggets."

- While the reporter is in the field, a member of the digital content team will use the reporter's tweets to write a story for the website. If they have enough information and the story is big enough, the digital team may also send out a push alert to mobile.

- When a reporter has wrapped up the reporting for social and TV, it is his or her responsibility to post a more complete web story. "It's really a three-screen strategy," Galean said. "Social, web and TV."

The goal is to create a news organization that keeps in mind both viewers and where they're consuming news, every minute of the day.

UNDERSTANDING AUDIENCE

Obviously, to do a good job in any medium a journalist must understand the audience. For example, in television, it's understood that most people don't really watch morning news programs; instead, they listen to them. So, broadcast journalists working on morning shows have been advised to write in a way that puts less emphasis on the visual elements of a story. Since the writer can't count on the audience seeing what is on the screen, the story has to make sense without any visual support.

In social media, data analysis indicates that it's easier to engage audiences on weekday mornings with Facebook than Twitter, and if you want to get a response to your Instagram post, avoid work hours altogether.[1]

All of these insights into what people want from a news organization's digital platform can be used to tell your stories more effectively by producing content that will satisfy their needs, regardless of the platform the audience chooses.

How People Use the Web

Since web-based news sites first appeared on the scene in the 1990s, a myriad of studies have been done on web usability—in other words, how people use websites. Though each study may say something slightly different, there are some universal principles for web use. Typical web readers do the following:

- *Scan content.* Online users are often skimming or scanning the content of a site, particularly when they first log on. That doesn't mean they won't read every word of an article that deeply interests them, but initially they're most often looking for information that grabs their attention. That's why headlines, for example, become so important on the web.

- *Look for the latest information.* Immediacy is one of the strengths of the web, and it's important to update news stories frequently and make it easy for the audience to see what's new. WRAL.com in Raleigh, North Carolina, is one of many news organizations that time stamps every story so the user knows when new information was last added.

- *Search for more.* In addition to readers who skim the content of a site, the online audience includes people who are actively seeking information about a particular topic that interests them. For example, let's say your station airs a story about a tuberculosis outbreak at a local school. At the end of the story, the news anchor could encourage viewers to go online for a list of the disease warning signs and preventive measures. At other times, you might be giving online users access to additional information through links to other useful websites or reminders of previously posted, relevant stories that are still available on your own site.

The Nielsen Norman Group (NN/g) has been a leader in web usability research for two decades. One of its most recent findings is that high-quality writing is one of the most

effective ways to turn scanners into readers. In other words, if you want people to read your online stories, you have to put some effort into making them good.

So, what makes a story good? Here are some suggestions from the research:

- Most people read online in what's called an "F-Pattern." Eyetracking technology enables researchers to see what people are looking at as they read digital content. What they've discovered is that people typically begin reading on the left side of a column of text, and as they read, they move to the right and they continue that way down the page. The challenge for journalists is that people tend to read a little bit less of the content on each line as they go move down through the story. (In languages meant to be read right to left, such as Arabic, readers follow a reversed F-Pattern.)

- To get people to consume more of our stories, researchers suggest creating content in a "Layer-Cake Pattern," using headings and sub-headings within the text. Users are able to scan to the headings and decide if the words represent content they're interested in. If they are, they'll read the text below it, and if they're not, they're likely to jump to the next heading.[2]

These findings should have an impact on the way we write for the web and the ways in which a journalist can take content generated for one medium and tailor it for the online audience.

@NCCapitol

Audit: State contractors can't account for 234 seized vehicles

Tags: Audits, David Lewis

Posted 10:00 a.m. today
Updated 11:41 a.m. today

144   G+ Share   20 Reactions

By Travis Fain

RALEIGH, N.C. — A pair of contractors tasked with towing, storing and auctioning off cars seized from impaired drivers and people who run from police can't account for 234 vehicles, according to a state auditor's report released Tuesday.

WRAL-TV in Raleigh, North Carolina, considers the audience in the way the station's website "time stamps" original posts and updates to stories.

Source: WRAL.com, http://www.wral.com/audit-state-contractors-can-t-account-for-234-seized-vehicles/16978654/ (accessed September 28, 2017).

WRITING FOR THE WEB

More than three-quarters of journalists working in TV news say their jobs require them to write for the web.[3] Fortunately, many of the techniques you've already learned, particularly in writing for broadcast, will help you succeed online; however, there are some additional things you need to know.

Grab Attention!

People often come to the web to see what's new in a breaking or ongoing story—the immediacy of online attracts them to the web much as it does to broadcast news. That means the opening of your online story has to be much like a good broadcast lead. A good online lead jumps out at users and makes them want to read more. Here's an example:

> A flood is forcing Omaha State University to cancel classes for a week. The school's computer room flooded yesterday, shutting down the network and making it impossible for the university to operate.

If you're a student at Omaha State, that lead sentence will clearly capture your attention. Even if you don't attend the school, floods and canceling classes for a week are unusual enough that it's likely a user will read on. When you write a lead sentence, you need to tell what the news is and present it in a way that will encourage as many people as possible to read more.

Use Time and Tense

Whenever possible, begin by telling users what's happening right now or what's expected to happen in the future. Web stories can and should be updated whenever information changes. For example, the news in the Omaha State story is that classes are being canceled, not the flooding that happened the day before.

This sounds obvious, but to write in present tense, you have to know what is happening right now. To write in future tense, you have to think about what's expected to happen soon. So, in the flood example, a future-tense lead might look something like this:

> Omaha State students won't be in class as usual this week. The university's computer room flooded yesterday, shutting down the network and making it impossible for the school to operate.

Specific time references can also add to a sense of urgency online:

> Omaha State University is cancelling classes this week. The school's computer room flooded yesterday, shutting down the network and making it impossible for the university to operate. At 2 p.m. today, school administrators will meet to figure out how to make up the instructional time lost. They are considering a shorter December holiday break. That could disrupt vacation plans and leave some businesses without part-time workers.

One word of caution here: If you are using specific time references and even present or future tense, it is critically important that you stay on top of the story and remove those references when they become outdated. For example, at 8 p.m., you don't want a story online that looks ahead to a 2 p.m. meeting that has already occurred.

Be Concise and Conversational

It's particularly important for web stories to use short declarative sentences. This technique should help you be clear and concise. It's also a good practice to stick to one idea per sentence, so that means avoiding long clauses and passive voice. Remember, readers are often scanning your copy, so this short and declarative style of writing may help hold their attention.

Also keep in mind that you're not writing to impress your audience, you're writing to inform your audience. You can be even more informal online than you might be on the air.

At WLOX-TV in Biloxi, Mississippi, the goal is to capitalize on the web's immediacy. Note the multiple uses of present or future tense in the story about the demolition of an abandoned building.

Source: WLOX.com, http://www.wlox .com/story/36475793/ jackson-county- eyesore-coming-down (accessed September 28, 2017).

"Write like you're dashing off an email note to a friend," says Scott Atkinson, news director at WWNY-TV in Watertown, New York. For example, Atkinson's web story about a predicted snowstorm that never came opened with this line: "OK. We were wrong." Write clearly and with context, he says, but use an intimate style, which seems well suited to the internet. Here's another example:

> Don't write: "The state Department of Health has added 172 rivers and lakes to the list of Florida water bodies that contain fish with harmful levels of mercury."

> Do write: "More rivers and lakes in Florida are full of fish with too much mercury, the state health department says."

Web users want to get the news quickly, and your writing should make content easy to absorb.

Conversational does not mean sloppy. It's absolutely essential that your online copy follow all the rules of good journalism. You need to be accurate, you need to attribute information, and you need to be grammatically correct. Online readers are no different from TV audiences or radio listeners; they expect their sources of news to be credible, no matter what the medium.

Write for the Scanners

Remember what we said earlier about the way people use the web? You need to make things easier for the scanners. Whenever possible you should break up the text into chunks.

- Use subheads. Smaller headlines in the body of the story describe for the reader what the next section of the story is about.

- Try bullet points. If you have a series of ideas you need to communicate, try laying them all out in a list for the reader.

- Keep paragraphs short. We've already described the need for short, declarative sentences, but even the paragraphs should be brief in an online story, with no more than one to two short sentences in each.

Most of what we've just described about writing for the web should be somewhat familiar to you, but you probably decide which of these techniques and stylistic approaches to apply depending on which medium you're writing for. Multimedia journalists, on the other hand, use all of them in almost every story they tell online.

Understand Print Style

Much of what we've discussed so far makes it appear that web writing follows all of the principles of good broadcast writing, and that's true, up to a point. But because web stories are read and not heard, they generally adhere to the conventions of print style. So it's worth reviewing some of the structural differences between print and broadcast, to be sure your web stories follow the basic rules.

Good writing for the web begins in the reporting, says Scott Fowler, an award-winning journalist at The Charlotte Observer in Charlotte, North Carolina.

"You've got to get name and age, date of birth, for everybody," Fowler says. "That's very basic but you'd be surprised how often it gets missed even among professionals." Getting people to spell out their names with any dashes, periods or capitalizations is a must. Fowler specifically asks for the date of birth because many people feel more comfortable stating that than saying their age.

Attribution comes first in broadcast, ahead of a sound bite, but usually is placed last in print and on the web, at the end of a quote. That's because what someone says is more likely to engage a reader than the name of the person saying it. If the source is a famous person, of course, it's fine to put the name first. For quotes that run more than one sentence, put the attribution after the first sentence.

Abbreviations that are shunned in broadcast are perfectly fine online. States, street addresses, titles and some months of the year can be abbreviated. In a broadcast script, you would write, "Police surrounded the apartment building at 2301 Central Avenue," for example, but online the address would read "2301 Central Ave." A broadcast story might refer to "Republican Senator Marco Rubio of Florida," but online he would be "Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla."

Writing in print style generally requires more detail too.

"Just think of your five senses and try to describe all that—describe what you're seeing, what you're hearing, what you're feeling," Fowler said. "If somebody said they ate at a fast food restaurant right before they had the auto wreck, you've got to find out which fast food restaurant it was and preferably what they had. That would be a much better detail if you know they had a Whopper at Burger King or the Southwest Salad at Chick-fil-A as opposed to the just generic 'They ate at a fast food restaurant and it was a tragedy they died ten minutes after that.' The more details you have the more likely it makes people feel like they're there."

KNOW AND TELL
**THREE PRINT WRITING TIPS**

Scott Fowler is a national award-winning sports columnist for The Charlotte Observer, the largest newspaper in the Carolinas. He has written for The Observer since 1994. As he says in his bio, Fowler has made several appearances on ESPN's "Outside the Lines" and serves as a frequent guest on local and national sports-radio talk shows, although he prefers print journalism because he has a hard time living without the delete key.

A regular speaker about how to write better, he often offers this advice.

1. Pretend your reader is a good friend and you are explaining this person you are writing about to them. This is better than the "I'm the teacher, you're the student, so shut up and listen" form of profile writing. Who would you rather listen to—a boring

(Continued)
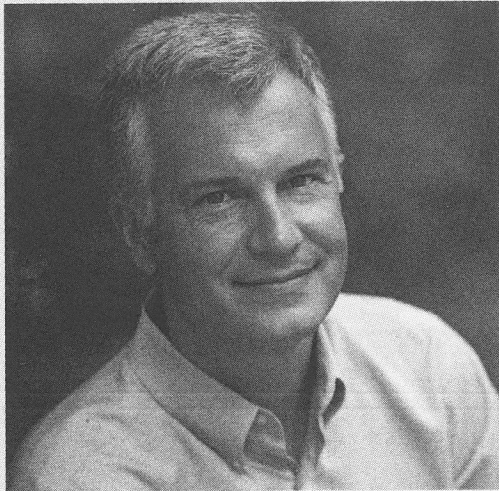
Source: Courtesy of Elise Fowler.

professor or a friend who will give you the real scoop? And read your lead out loud to yourself!

2. Three Ds to make your writing pop like a 3D movie: Drama, Details, Diligence. Fowler says you want to try to get dramatic tension up high, create some sort of conflict, offer details to give people a sense of being there and be diligent in answering all of the readers' questions.

3. Give your reader a reward for finishing the story—end with a bang, not a whimper. Fowler says, "You don't want to put all of your good information in the first few paragraphs because if you do and then they stick with you, it just gets a little boring and a little more boring as they go down and they're going to be very compelled to want to skip that."

TRADE TOOLS
WEB WRITING STYLE

For broadcast writers in particular, the online writing style has a lot of similarities to the way you already produce copy. But don't forget that writing for the web involves thinking about the unique characteristics of the medium:

- Grab attention with your first line of copy.

- Put key words at or near the start of your first line.

- Use present or future tense in the opening line whenever possible.

- Make sure you explain why the story is relevant to a general audience.

- Use short, declarative sentences to make the copy easier to read and absorb.

- Use a conversational style that capitalizes on the intimacy of the internet.

- Mind the fundamentals—good grammar and punctuation, accuracy and ethics.

- Write for the scanners; use subheads, bullets and short paragraphs.

Currency symbols not used in broadcast are standard in online stories, and you can use specific numbers online. A broadcast script would refer to the city budget as being "just over 231 million dollars," but the online story should read "$231.2 million."

Spell out numbers if you begin a sentence with them. The only exception is starting a sentence with a year. So you'd write: "2014 was the first year the course was offered," but

---

you'd spell out the number if the sentence began by saying how many students registered: "Twenty-four students signed up in 2014, the first year the course was offered."

Use full names and titles in online stories. On the radio, you might refer to "President Trump," but in a first reference online you would write "President Donald Trump." Capitalize titles used before names.

It's always a good idea to have access to a style guide like the AP Stylebook to check how to handle specific situations and stay up to date on changes.

ETHICS IN ACTION
NEWS RELEASES

Journalism isn't the only profession trying to capitalize on the power of digital media. PR is doing it too. News releases often include complete television news stories that stations are free to run, along with supplemental information in the form of news stories to be posted on the web or published in the newspaper.

Some television stations have run video news releases (VNRs) without any attribution at all. Newspapers sometimes print press releases without changing a word. The problem is that if the source is not disclosed, the audience has no idea that the accuracy of the content has not been verified.

The student-produced newscast at Virginia Commonwealth University has a strict policy of identifying the source of any video not gathered by students involved in the show.

Source: Courtesy of Virginia Commonwealth University School of Mass Communications.
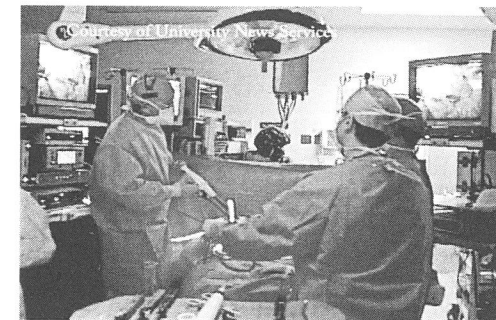
Sharing the source of the video or column allows viewers to apply a healthy amount of skepticism to what they're seeing or reading.

The Radio Television Digital News Association's Code of Ethics states that professional journalists should "clearly disclose the origin of information and label all material provided by outsiders." The group also urges news organizations to use VNR content only when there is no other way to get the video and the story has clear news value.

Many news organizations require that the source of outside video be clearly identified both verbally and visually. For example, in a story about a new kind of poultry processing, you might not be allowed inside the plant to shoot your own video. In that case, you might include the following line of copy in your story: "As you can see in this video provided by SuperPoultry Foods, the company says the new machines will change the way each chicken is cleaned." In addition to the verbal reference, you might add text over the video to identify the source on both TV and the web: SuperPoultry Foods.

If you're using a quote online that you've lifted directly from a news release, just add a reference: "New machines will change the way each chicken is cleaned at the company's processing plants," Super-Poultry's CEO Bill Smith said in a news release.

The best way to protect your credibility and serve your audience is to be transparent—let people know what information you have and where you got it.

ADAPTING STORIES FOR THE WEB

Whether you write a new version of your story for use on the web or adapt a story from another medium, the same basic rules for online readability apply. So, let's put all of this into practice by looking at some examples.

Print to Online

The image on page 161 shows how a story about a mistrial in an important federal case appeared on the front page of The Arizona Republic newspaper. When that same story was posted online, as you can see on page 162, it was enhanced for the web audience.

Notice the use of white space—literally the blank spaces between each paragraph or design element on the page. Though not visible in this image, subheads were added to break up the story into sections; a video element was uploaded, as well as a photo slide show and links to related content. The story is packed with good information, but it's broken down in a way that makes it easy for the online user to follow.

Broadcast to Online

TV scripts require special attention when being revised for use on the web. Cory Bergman, general manager for Breaking News, a social media company owned by NBC, came up with a checklist for converting broadcast scripts to online stories:

- Combine copy. If you're modifying a package script, combine the lead-in, body of the package and tag all on the same page. Delete redundancies. Make sure the story starts off with a strong sentence, not a tease line.

- Remove extraneous information. Strip out computer coding, including director, editing and graphics notations.

- Fix capitalization. If you use all upper case for your scripts, convert to upper and lower case, correctly capitalizing as you go along.

- Add quotes. Change the sound bites to quotes, adding the correct punctuation and attribution.

- Form complete sentences. Drop unnecessary punctuation like ellipses and hyphens, and convert sentence fragments into complete sentences.

- Remove video references. Delete any language that makes a direct reference to video and audio, but add appropriate description to bring a visual element to your copy.

- Beef up the story. Add important details. Web copy should deliver more information than 20-second TV stories deliver (with the possible exception of breaking news).

- Bring it all together. Make sure the story reads well from beginning to end.

- Add interactivity. Finally, add links to any relevant materials.[4]

The article with the headline "Mistrial declared in Bundy ranch case" is a good example of a standard newspaper story featured on the front page of The Arizona Republic. The story is important enough to warrant a front-page treatment, but no image is included. The summary blurb of "Judge: Prosecutors failed to disclose key evidence" may give some readers all they need without reading the full story.

Source: Newseum.org, http://cdn.newseum.org/dfp/pdf21/AZ_AR.pdf (accessed December 21, 2017).

On azcentral.com, the website for The Arizona Republic and KPNX-TV in Phoenix, the Bundy ranch case story featured a different writing style and several multimedia elements. The differences include a headline written in present tense, subheads, links to background material, videos with key players in the trial, a slide show that walked viewers through the history of the trial and buttons to share the story easily in social media.

Source: AZCentral.com, https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/arizona-investigations/2017/12/20/cliven-bundy-nevada-ranch-cattle-grazing-blm-standoff-trial/965402001/ [accessed December 21, 2017].

"This is one of the few cases where the entire defense team is in agreement they (the defendants) didn't do anything they were charged with."

Navarro's ruling for a mistrial was limited to defense motions filed two weeks ago. It did not take into account another document turned over to the defense last week and leaked on pro-Bundy websites that raises more criticism of the BLM's conduct and use of force during the cattle roundup.

A federal investigator alleged in a Nov. 27 memo to the assistant U.S. attorney general that prosecutors in the Bundy ranch standoff trial covered up misconduct by law-enforcement agents who engaged in "likely policy, ethical and legal violations."

Of course, in a multimedia newsroom, the online version can also include the video story you produced for the newscast or additional, important clips that didn't make air. You can enhance the content with a photo or infographic, a slideshow or a map. We talk about a number of ways to produce multimedia content in Chapter 9.

The following is an example of a standard broadcast package script. The story about a mother's grief following the sentencing for her teenaged son's killer was also posted on the website for WSOC-TV in Charlotte, North Carolina. Read through the script and then take a look at how the copy was converted into a web story.

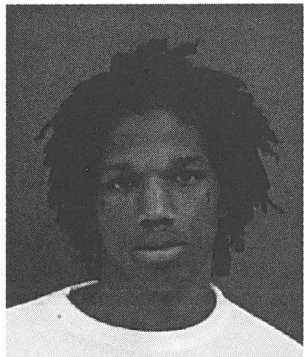| Anchor on cam	{***Alison**}
	ALL NEW TONIGHT...A CASE THAT INVOLVED TWO GUNSHOTS, A CAR CRASH AND A CHANGING STORY IS NOW ENDING WITH ONE YOUNG MAN GOING TO PRISON. REPORTER MARK BECKER SHOWS US WHY THE VICTIM'S MOTHER IS NOT HAPPY WITH A JUDGE'S SENTENCE.
Take PKG ———————————	{---PKG---}
	(23:48:00) It's just painful....
	MARK BECKER:
	TONYA EVANS SHOOK HER HEAD AND SEARCHED FOR THE RIGHT WORDS TO MATCH THE PAIN THAT HAS BEEN SO MUCH A PART OF HER SINCE HER 19 YEAR OLD SON.... MARKAS VEREEN WAS KILLED BY A YOUNG MAN HE CALLED A FRIEND.
	RICCO MCHAM HAS NEVER ADMITTED PULLING THE TRIGGER, BUT THIS MORNING HE PLEAD GUILTY TO INVOLUNTARY MANSLAUGHTER IN VEREEN'S DEATH BACK ON JULY FOURTH OF LAST YEAR, WHEN POLICE FOUND BOTH MCHAM AND VEREEN SHOT IN A CAR THAT SLAMMED INTO THE WALL OF AN EMERGENCY ROOM.
	POLICE LATER SAID MCHAM SHOT VEREEN....PERHAPS BY ACCIDENT.... THEN MAY HAVE SHOT HIMSELF IN THE LEG TO MAKE THEM LOOK ELSEWHERE.
	NATS
	(mb homicide day 9:53:15) This is a tragic and unfortunate occurrence....
	MARK BECKER:
	THIS MORNING MCHAM'S ATTORNEY SAID MCHAM AND VEREEN WERE "CLOSER THAN BROTHERS", AND CALLED IT AN UNFORTUNATE OCCURRENCE.
	BUT TONYA EVANS ROSE TO TELL THE JUDGE AND MCHAM.... THAT HE HAD BEATEN THE SYSTEM AGAIN, AND AFTERWARD TOLD US THE THREE YEARS HE WILL SPEND IN PRISON IS NOT JUSTICE.
	TONYA EVANS:
	(23:51:52) No it's not enough. Having my son for 19 years was not enough, so there's no way in hell three years will ever be enough. Never.
	MARK BECKER, CH 9, EYEWITNESS NEWS.

Source: Adapted from "Family of man sentenced for killing friend talks to Channel 9," WSOC.com, http://www.wsoctv.com/news/local/charlotte-man-receives-3-year-sentence-in-friends-shooting-death/609326200 [accessed September 28, 2017].

CHARLOTTE, N.C. - A Charlotte man will spend a little more than three years in prison for shooting and killing his friend last year.

[PAST COVERAGE: CMPD arrests teenage murder suspect who cut off electronic monitor]

Ricco McHam pleaded guilty Thursday to involuntary manslaughter in the shooting death of Markas Vereen, 19, on the Fourth of July in the Grier Heights neighborhood.

Vereen was shot in the back of the head.

Mark Becker ✓
@MarkBeckerWSOC9   🐦 Follow

Ricco McHam shot his friend and drove him to the hospital. He will spend a little more than 3 years in prison

9:21 AM · Sep 14, 2017

Officials said McHam shot Vereen and then drove him to the hospital.

Tonya Evans, Vereen's mother, spoke in court and said that her son's death has devastated her family. She told Channel 9 that three years in prison is not enough.

'Life is priceless. No, it's not enough. Having my son for 19 years was not enough. So there's no way in (explative) that three years will ever be enough, never,' Evans said.

Source: "Family of man sentenced for killing friend talks to Channel 9," WSOC.com, http://www.wsoctv.com/news/local/charlotte-man-receives-3-year-sentence-in-friends-shooting-death/609326200 [Accessed September 28, 2017].

Note that the online version gets right to the point. A tweet is used as the image and, though not seen here, the reporter's package was posted as well. Additional background information is provided through a link to a previous story. The web story pulls together the anchor intro and package script into a solid textual presentation. With a little more time, the writer could have enhanced the story further with a timeline, a slideshow and other multimedia elements that would add depth without adding length.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Now that you've learned how to prepare text versions of your stories for the web, you need to make sure that people are actually going to read them. You don't have to be a web expert to know that search engines, such as Google, Yahoo, Bing and others, play a critical role in helping people find news and information online. Savvy journalists know a little something about what's called search engine optimization, or SEO, to help people find their stories as opposed to someone else's.

According to Webopedia, "Search engine optimization is a methodology of strategies, techniques and tactics used to increase the amount of visitors to a website by obtaining a high-ranking placement in the search results page of a search engine . . . SEO helps to ensure that a site is accessible to a search engine and improves the chances that the site will be found by the search engine."[5] If that sounds complicated, it is and it isn't. There are some simple things you can do to write web headlines and copy that's more likely to show up high in search engine results.

Key Words

If you've ever Googled anything, you've used key words. Essentially, key words are those that an individual would use to search for a particular story, topic or piece of information. Before you post your copy to the web, you'll want to think about the words someone would use if they were searching for a story on your topic. Then you want to be sure those words are included in your headline and in the first sentence of your story. If you do that, your story should show up higher in the search engine results, which means more people are likely to click on it.

The Washington Post once published a story about high-tech gadgets that were revolutionizing fishing, in some cases altogether replacing the need for traditional bait such as worms. In the newspaper, the headline "Wormed Out" worked well. It was supported by a subhead that read, "Technology is Replacing Some Traditional Fishing Practices," and it

KNOW AND TELL
HOW TWITTER FEEDS THE WEB IN LOCAL TV

Mark Becker ✓
@MarkBeckerWSOC9

Veteran reporter at WSOC-TV. Covering Charlotte news for 30 years. Enjoy time with my family. Love my Cardinals and running.

Source: Twitter/@MarkBeckerWSOC9.

Facebook may be the big dog when it comes to driving traffic to local TV news websites, but Twitter is an essential tool for generating content for the web. Mark Becker has been a part of the reporting team at WSOC-TV in Charlotte, North Carolina, for more than three decades. Quite often what ends up on the station's website will have started with one of his tweets.

"I'll go out on a story and if it's a big story, our web department will have already started posting stuff as soon as they can," Becker said. "They'll use some of my tweets to build what is essentially the first draft of the web story."

Becker says later in the day, he'll typically check in with the digital team to see what else he can do to help flesh out the story.

"I may have gone out and spoken with somebody beyond what was said in the news conference or what I've tweeted out earlier or I've gathered some quotes to flesh out the story."

When the story isn't breaking or critical to the station's digital strategy, Becker says he'll finish his package for TV and then concentrate on writing a web version.

"I'll write my TV story and then copy that script, paste, rearrange and make it essentially what we used to call a newspaper story, a print story where people will not see the video as they read the story," Becker said. "I have to change and describe, perhaps set up a little bit, the sound bite that now becomes a quote. It's just really finessing it, rearranging it."

Becker says what he calls "the style factor" is important, too. "You have to make sure that you write, 'on Thursday morning in court,' as opposed to 'this morning in court' because it's going to live longer than one day online."

WSOC-TV's digital team checks every story before it's posted, a luxury that not every reporter has, but Becker says every reporter has to be his or her own editor, regardless of platform.

"If it's out there on the web, it's out there. It's not like you can pull it back. It counts just as much as the story that's on the air. That's the thing that I think that we all have to be careful about."

included a graphic of a fish, hook and worm. Online, the producers knew "Wormed Out" wouldn't make sense without all that supporting material, so they changed the headline to read, "Technology Replaces Worm."

But that headline may have led some people to believe it was a story about computer viruses. If you were searching for this content, what's the one key word you think most people would use in looking for this story? If you guessed fishing, we think you're right. A stronger web headline might look something like this: "Fishing Better with High-Tech Worms."

Web Headlines and Captions

As we've indicated, headlines play a critically important role on the web and not just for search engine optimization. Just as they do with newspapers, people often make decisions on whether or not to read an online story on the basis of the headline. But headlines do function in a slightly different way online than they do in print. As the fishing story example illustrates, a clever layout that includes a photo with a caption, a headline and a subhead may work just fine in print, but this arrangement may fall flat on the web. For broadcast journalists, writing headlines may be something you learned a little about in a print reporting class, but you probably don't feel like you're much of an expert. This next section looks at how to write effective online headlines and summaries.

TRADE TOOLS
WEB HEADLINE TIPS

Jakob Nielsen, an expert on web usability, offers this advice to headline writers:

The copy must be:

- Understandable out of context (because headlines often appear without articles, as in search engine results).

- Tell readers something useful (because you want them to click).

- Omit non-essential words (because convoluted headlines lose readers).

- Front-loaded with the most important key words (because users often scan only the beginning of list items).[6]

Bottom line: Web headlines are not teases; they are straightforward and to the point. Your audience should understand what the story is about with nothing more than the headline. And knowing what we know about how people use the web and the role of search engines, the best web heads are also crafted to put the story's most important words at the beginning.

Headline Tips

The best headlines are straightforward, using action verbs and indicating exactly what the story is about. They are accurate, never raising a question the story doesn't answer. Remember, web users are often scanning for information, and they want to know what they're getting into before clicking on a headline to read the complete story. Questions in headlines can often entice users to click to find out the answer, as can headlines that include the words "why" or "how to." Proper nouns and names, however, don't tend to work well in headlines unless they refer to something famous or a person well known to the intended audience.

Headlines should give people a compelling reason to stop and read the story, says Mark Bulik, senior editor for digital headlines at the New York Times. "One cardinal rule is that we don't want headlines that leave readers feeling cheated when they've finished the article. That's our definition of clickbait," Bulik says. "The challenge in a competitive news

environment is writing headlines that grab the reader's attention while maintaining our standards. So, for example, you might see more headlines for explanatory pieces that begin with How, Why or What. But you're not going to see 'You Won't Believe What Happened Next!'"[7]

Online producers at the Richmond Times-Dispatch are well aware that headlines matter. The newspaper headline over a story about a football game that Virginia Tech lost to Auburn read "Maroon & Blue." It was meant to be a clever reference to Tech's team color (maroon) and the fans' feelings (blue), but it wouldn't have worked online. So the newspaper's web producers changed the headline to "Va. Tech falls to Auburn despite 4th-quarter burst." The more literal headline tells the online reader exactly what this story is about.

A study of 250,000 headlines by the web analytics company Chartbeat found that interrogatives like "what" and "where," demonstrative pronouns like "this" and "these," as well as numbers, quotations and superlatives (like best and worst) led to increased readership. Using question marks and time references had the opposite effect.[8]

GO ONLINE

Module 7: Find, create and revise web headlines to make them work best.

TOP HEADLINES

Van Zandt County man sentenced to 10 years in prison for drug trafficking
From the Office of the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Texas TYLER, Texas – A 28-year-old Ben Wheeler, Texas man has been sentenced to federal prison for drug trafficking and firearms violations in the Eastern District of Texas, announced Acting U.S. Attorney Brit Featherston today. Corey Lance Parish pleaded guilty on May 16, 2017, to possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine and possession of a firearm during a drug trafficking crime. Parish was se...
MORE

Afternoon Weather at your Fingertips ◼◄

Former Hudson ISD teacher who had sex with underage teens agrees to 10 years in prison
A former Hudson ISD kindergarten teacher who had sexual intercourse with at least six high school students agreed to a plea bargain deal of 10 years in a Texas Department of Criminal Justice prison Thursday morning.
MORE

Update: Former Walmart manager found guilty of aggravated robbery
A former Walmart store manager who is accused of helping plan a robbery at his own store is on trial.
MORE

Second victim of fatal Winona crash identified ◼◄
Officials have identified the second victim of a fatal crash in Winona.
MORE

Victim identified in Henderson County shooting, suspect in custody ◼◄
A suspect is behind bars and charged with murder after admitting to an overnight shooting death of a man in Henderson County.
MORE

Dallas woman involved in credit card fraud case in Tyler indicted ◼◄
A Dallas woman has been indicted by the 7th Judicial District Court in Smith County for engaging in an organized criminal activity charge.
MORE

KLTV in Tyler, Texas, showcases some key stories with a headline and a summary blurb that describes what the story is about. The website also indicates which stories include video, since that's a major driver of online audience.

Source: KLTV.com, http://www.kltv.com/ (accessed September 28, 2017).

Often, if not most of the time, your headline will appear on the webpage and in social media without any accompanying text and often without a picture to help showcase the story. For that reason, you'll need to make sure that what you've written for the headline stands on its own; your readers won't be able to rely on the clues they might get from a summary blurb or a visual element.

If your story will feature a summary blurb, be sure that what you've written will serve the needs of the user who is scanning for content. Give users enough information to know what the story is about without reading anything more.

Photo Caption Tips

Because online photos draw the attention of users who may not read the story that goes with them, you should provide information along with each photo so the picture itself tells a complete story. Online photo captions can be placed just below the image on the page or embedded in the image itself so they show up when the user hovers a mouse over the image.

A caption, also called a cutline, should identify any important people in the photo and explain the action taking place. If several people are in the photo, be clear about who is who. If you identify only one person in a group, make sure you locate that person in the photo or describe what makes him or her stand out. You might indicate that someone is "on the left," for example, or "in the green hat." If you name multiple people, list them in order, "From left" or "(L-R)."

Write captions in complete sentences, generally in the present tense. In most instances, you'll want to tell where the photo was taken in the first sentence. Additional information or background in a second sentence can help put the photo in context so people understand what they are looking at. You may want to use past or future tense for background information. The date the photo was taken and the name of the photographer are often added in parentheses at the end of the caption.

Avoid stating the obvious in a caption. Your goal is not simply to describe the picture but to give the picture meaning. So instead of writing, "Environmental activist Lisa Muñoz stands next to the fence surrounding the old Kinsley landfill," write a caption that tells why she is there. "Environmental activist Lisa Muñoz says the state hasn't done enough to clean up the old Kinsley landfill."

Keep captions short. Two sentences are usually plenty. A good caption helps the reader understand the content of a photo but doesn't repeat the entire story. Instead, a well-crafted caption gives just enough information to put a photo in context, while encouraging the viewer to read the story to find out more.

MOVING INTO MOBILE

A huge increase in the use of mobile devices has created a significant change for news organizations. Mobile usage is increasingly driving online traffic, and mobile apps are generating additional audience for news content. Just as the web changed writing styles and presentation of content, so has mobile, and what we learn about the new medium will continue to evolve.

Thinking Differently for Mobile

Louis Gump has been thinking about mobile delivery of news and information for years. The former vice president of mobile for CNN, Gump is now CEO for NewsOn, a news video streaming service that allows people to watch more than 150 local TV stations across the United States from a mobile or internet-connected device.

"Start with the assumption that mobile is different," Gump says, "then work backward into the similarities."

For example, Gump says when you're creating content for mobile devices, you need to think about how people use those devices. Instead of clicking and scrolling like people do online, mobile users are swiping, tapping, sharing and often literally moving as they travel with their devices.

Those differences are key to creating content that's optimized for mobile, and though some of the functionality of your content will be locked into the app construction or dependent on the responsiveness of the website design, you should at least be able to control the way your stories are written.

Writing for Mobile

According to research, it may be twice as hard to comprehend information you consume on a smartphone-size mobile device. The limited amount of information displayed on the screen requires users to remember more as they move from screen to screen. In addition, the act of scrolling is a distraction, and you have to do it more often on a smaller device.[9]

It's important to keep this background in mind when you are creating content that you know will be consumed on mobile devices. Fortunately, many of the same rules for good web writing apply to mobile as well.

- The screen is smaller; write even tighter. Broadcast journalists are quite familiar with the need to eliminate unnecessary words and cut the fat from a story. Your mobile reader will appreciate the effort even more.

- Front-load your stories. A relatively small number of people will read your entire piece, so everything they really need to know to understand what the story is about must be near the top. At the BBC, they try to get the essentials of the story in the first four, short paragraphs.

- Break it up. As we recommended earlier in the chapter when discussing web writing, subheads and bullets are useful in making content easier to consume. On a small-screen mobile device, those techniques will also make it easier for someone scrolling through content to figure out where something is, if he or she goes back to review or look for something on the page again.

Be aware that on mobile, headlines are often truncated to fit the screen. Keep headlines to 65 or 70 characters or your story might appear to be about something it's not. When an AP headline, "White House: Obama to delay immigration action," was cut off on mobile

it read, "White House: Obama to delay immigration," appearing to suggest the president had plans to move somewhere else.

Some newsrooms use software that requires writers to see what their content will look like on mobile as well as on the web before they can publish a story. If you're not able to
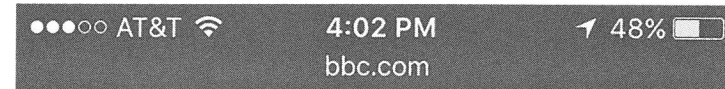
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bbc.com
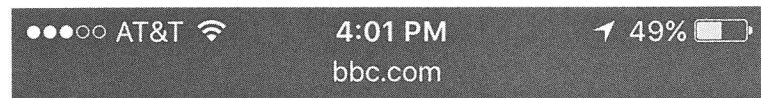
Puerto Rico: Trump lifts shipping ban for storm-hit island

🕐 2 hours ago   f   🐦   ⤳

Why Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico so hard

US President Donald Trump has lifted shipping restrictions to help fuel and supplies reach storm-ravaged Puerto Rico, the White House has said.

●●●○○ AT&T 🔶   4:02 PM   ◤ 48% ▭
bbc.com

The most powerful hurricane to hit Puerto Rico in nearly 90 years, Maria swept across the island last Wednesday.

GETTY IMAGES

How bad is the situation?

Many of Puerto Rico's 3.4 million residents have been without electricity and other basic necessities since the storm struck.

The death toll was not as bad as the scores killed by Hurricane Irma - Maria claimed more than 30 lives in the Caribbean, including at least 16 in Puerto Rico.

Many news organizations rely on their web producers and editors to make decisions that affect the news outlets' mobile content. Some, like the BBC, have mobile editors whose jobs involve selecting stories and sometimes rewriting them to make them more mobile-friendly. These images include the first two screens of information displayed on an iPhone. Note the summary blurb at the top of the image on the left, which gives the mobile user the most important details.

Source: BBC.co.uk, m.bbc.co.uk/news (accessed September 28, 2017).

access a mobile-ready preview, try splitting your work into three columns, suggests Mick Côté of The Canadian Press. You should be able to tell at a glance whether your paragraphs are too long for a mobile screen.

We talk more about how mobile editors are using alternative story forms and thinking about the types of photos and video that work best for mobile in Chapter 9.

TAKING IT HOME

For several years, as the online news audience grew, there was a lot of hand-wringing in newsrooms. Some experts asserted that print would soon be dead and that traditional over-the-air news broadcasts might not be too far behind. When mobile exploded on the scene in the mid-2000s, it wasn't unusual to hear some say, "the web is dead." While it's critical that news organizations pay attention to changes in audience behavior and the rise of new technologies, most traditional news outlets now expect to ensure their survival by building new audiences and finding new sources of revenue, while they use new delivery platforms in addition to legacy media.

For those embarking on a career in journalism today, all this likely means there will be new types of job opportunities. Already we're seeing more and more examples of news organizations hiring social media reporters, mobile editors and digital producers, jobs that didn't exist less than a decade ago. In addition, news managers expect anyone who's working in the newsroom to understand how people are using the web and social and mobile media for news consumption, as well as how to apply that knowledge to their writing and storytelling for these new media. It's no longer enough to simply cut and paste content from another medium onto a website and expect users to accept what's there. At a minimum, your web and mobile stories should be formatted to fit online users' expectations when it comes to style—from language to paragraph length to headlines. Writing for these various media is different from writing for broadcast or print, and good multimedia journalists embrace these styles.

TALKING POINTS

1. Think about your favorite news website. What do you like best about it? Log on to it to see if you can find any evidence that the site's producers are trying to take advantage of the ways in which people use websites. List at least three things the site is doing well and three things it could do better to capitalize on website usability.

2. Grab your smartphone and find a story that incorporates some good mobile-writing techniques. Find that same story on a news website. What's different about the two stories? Do you see any evidence that someone reformatted the mobile content? Is there something you think the editor could have done to improve the story for the mobile audience?

3. Go online to your favorite news website. Find a headline that looks intriguing enough for you to click on it and read the story. Was the headline true to the story's content? What was it about the headline that enticed you to click through? Is the subject matter inherently interesting to you? How did the headline writer make sure that someone interested in this topic would click on it? Can you suggest a better headline that might invite more people to read the story?

ETHICS CHALLENGES

1. More and more stations are relying on their reporters' tweets as the foundation of a web story. Does that increase the potential for errors in the web story? Why or why not?

2. When you're writing for the web, you're often pulling from other sources to add background or additional information for your story. Of course, it's critical that anything you didn't write yourself gets attribution, but what about aggregated stories—those that are written almost entirely based on others' work? Read this exploration of the issue from the late journalist Steve Buttry (http://bit.ly/JTLmDi) and then determine whether you think aggregation can be done ethically or is always "stealing."

ONLINE LEARNING MODULE 7

For chapter exercises, practice tools and additional resources, visit this chapter's online learning module at study.sagepub.com/advancingthestory. You'll find:

- SKILL BUILDING: Convert a standard television story script into a web version and then review what the reporter for the story actually published online.

- DISCOVER: Review what makes a good web headline and summary. Learn more about how to create successful headlines and summaries on your own.

- EXPLORE: Visit websites for new research on the way people use the web for news information and more great web writing advice.

Also, continue your work on the ONGOING STORY. Write a web version of this story, using the techniques outlined in the chapter you've just read. See one approach to telling this story online.

▶ Image credit: iStock.com/MicrovOne

9 STORYTELLING
Digital

Multimedia journalists start with the basic elements of text, audio and video, photos, data or documents to create multidimensional stories. They recognize that multimedia stories are not linear, so they give users a variety of ways to navigate the content. And they look for opportunities to make information interactive, not static.

Online, mobile and social stories can take many forms, and new approaches are being developed all the time. While many stories are presented as a combination of text and photos, those stories rarely take full advantage of digital media. Multimedia journalists have to think short and long, as well as quick and deep, to meet the needs of consumers on different platforms.

You may use the same information in stories for different media, but the way you use it may change. You'll have the opportunity to include more information in an online story than you will in a TV or radio piece, but that additional information doesn't have to be folded into the narrative. You can break out information to create graphics, timelines and searchable databases. In social media, you might provide a 360 view of a location or event, or you might create an interactive meme that asks people to share their reactions to some aspect of a story you're reporting.

Let's go back to that protest march we described in Chapter 6. On television, you might choose to tell what happened and why through the eyes of a demonstrator and a police officer. The online coverage would likely be broader and include the impact of the march and its aftermath on demonstrators, bystanders, government workers and downtown businesses. You may want a detailed map of the protest route, highlighting businesses that had to close as a result of the chaos. You might also include a list or timeline of previous downtown demonstrations, a link to the city ordinance regulating police use of tear gas and another link to public health information about the potential effects of "riot control agents."

Just as you wouldn't tell a story the same way on TV and online, you'd approach a story differently to tell it on smartphones and tablets, says design guru Mario Garcia. "Smartphones are going to be lean forward platforms, used repeatedly during the day, as we seek to get headlines and short takes on stories," he says, "while the tablet, a lean back platform, is where long narratives, more documentary type of stories find a home."[1]

Social media is designed to boost audience engagement, so much of the most successful content will have a strong emotional component. As we noted in Chapter 5, it will often also include text, captions and many more visual close-ups to accommodate audience preferences for viewing the content on smartphones with their small screens and the sound off.

Every element you choose to include in a story, regardless of distribution platform, should enhance its impact and credibility. Do it well for online, mobile or social, and you can offer the audience multiple ways to experience and explore the news. In this chapter, we detail a number of ways that news organizations and individual reporters are adding interactivity and making their work more engaging.

DATA VISUALIZATION

One of the most exciting attributes of the web is that it gives the audience access to customized information. For example, if a newspaper conducts an investigation of fire code violations in your community, it would be impossible for the reporter to include in the article the inspection records for every property. But you can publish the records on the web, and you can make the records easily searchable so users can look up specific schools, favorite restaurants or the local sports stadiums to check on their safety. This capability goes a long way toward making important stories more relevant for the individual news consumer.

Interactive graphics and other forms of data visualization allow users to explore information at their own pace and in as much or as little detail as they wish. While many of the same principles that apply to TV graphics also apply online, the potential for interactivity adds another layer of complexity. Building an interactive in multiple layers allows journalists to share more data online than they ever could on the air. And interactives can effectively combine different types of graphics, making the data more interesting to navigate.

GO ONLINE

Module 9: Learn how to build an interactive map.

You may not be expected to design complex interactive graphics on your own, but you can make yourself more valuable as a journalist if you know how to build a simple one. Either way, it's helpful to understand the principles and concepts behind them.

For starters, you need to decide what kind of interactive is appropriate for the data you are working with. A list of property owners and home values in a story about foreclosures could be turned into a map. Developments in a major news story over a period of months could be plotted on a timeline. Other options include charts and tables, which can be created and shared in minutes using free online tools.

Maps

Interactive maps allow you to organize information about multiple locations and put it in perspective for the audience. They can be put together quickly, so maps are often produced in connection with breaking news stories. After a fertilizer plant explosion that killed and injured more than 100 people in the town of West, Texas, WFAA-TV in Dallas

built a map showing the location of all facilities in the state that stored large quantities of ammonium nitrate, suspected to be the source of the explosion. KFOR-TV in Oklahoma City created a simple map after a tornado devastated the town of Moore, Oklahoma, letting users compare the track and intensity of the storm with previous tornadoes in the same area.

The NBC affiliate in West Hartford, Connecticut, WVIT-TV, created a clickable map to go along with a series of stories about the hazard of crumbling basement walls in hundreds of homes across the state. Using data from the regional council of governments, the station plotted the locations of homes with crumbling foundations.
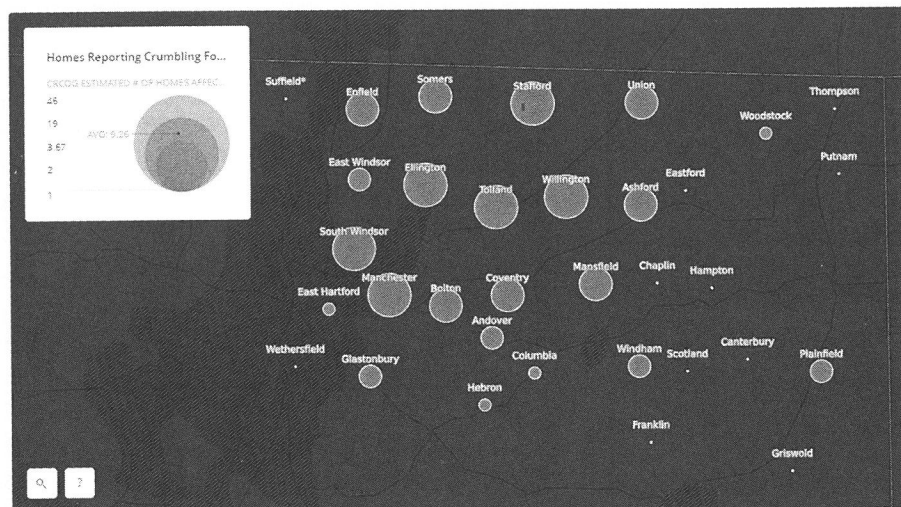
The television stories showed what the cracked basement walls looked like and introduced viewers to homeowners facing tens of thousands of dollars in costs to replace the walls. Obviously, the TV stories could not provide the level of customized content that could be offered online. With the interactive map, users could see at a glance which towns had the most reports of failing concrete and, by hovering over each dot, they could find the estimated number of affected homes in each town.

Reporter Lee Zurik of WVUE-TV in New Orleans says the audience response to interactive maps is gratifying. His story about abandoned oil wells in Louisiana included a map of every location. "We heard from a lot of viewers after who searched our map and basically said, 'I didn't realize these were so close to me. Oh, my goodness!' And the only reason they would have been able to determine that is not by watching our story on TV, but by going to what we did on digital and actually looking through the maps there."

Maps are among the easiest interactive graphics to build, using free online tools like Google MyMaps or BatchGeo.com. You'll find a video explanation of how to create a simple interactive map on the companion blog for this book, AdvancingtheStory.com.

WVIT-TV used a clickable map to let users find information about crumbling basement walls across the state of Connecticut. This type of individualized content is a core strength of the web.

Source: NBCConnecticut.com, https://www.nbcconnecticut.com/troubleshooters/Map-of-Connecticut-Homes-Reporting-Crumbling-Foundations-406586945.html (accessed October 31, 2017).

Timelines

Stories that evolve over time are prime candidates for interactives. The impact of an oil spill, for example, or developments in a high-profile court case can be illustrated with a timeline, giving users the opportunity to see how a story unfolded. Timelines are also well-suited for success stories, say when a local kid makes it big in the music business, or for obituaries.

The most basic interactive timeline puts users in the driver's seat so they can scroll through the chronologically arranged content at their own pace. A more sophisticated interactive timeline gives users a chance to explore developments that interest them in more depth, by clicking to watch an embedded video, for example, or to read related documents. KSAZ-TV in Phoenix created a timeline, including photos and links to individual stories, for a local murder trial that made national headlines.

Timelines are relatively easy to produce using free online tools like Knight Lab's TimelineJS. Another option is to use Wakelet, which makes it easy to incorporate social media posts and organize them chronologically.

ETHICS IN ACTION
PUBLIC INFORMATION

There is a great deal of information available online through government and law enforcement agencies. In many communities, for example, the property appraiser lists on the web the owner's name, property value and specific floor plan for every home appraised. A news organization could create a quick link to that information that would make it much easier for casual users to surf the data. What kind of privacy issues does that raise? Has the news organization now made it easier for unscrupulous people to do something illegal like break into a home? Or because the information is already public, has the news organization done nothing more than make public access easier?

These questions have been asked often in regard to the publication of sex offender registries. Because most states require convicted sex offenders to register their names and addresses with local law enforcement, many news organizations have done stories on how the public can access that information. Some have even gone so far as to make accessing the information easier by creating their own searchable databases. Kelly McBride, an ethics instructor at the Poynter Institute in St. Petersburg, Florida, believes that many newsrooms simply take the attitude that "if it's legal, we are going to do it." She worries that in the case of the sex offender registry, some readers or viewers might overreact to the coverage, either by retaliating against one of the sex offenders or allowing fears of attack to alter their lives. She says newsrooms "should be obligated to go beyond what is legal and weigh the value of what they are legally allowed to do against the harm or good that can come of it and make a decision on journalistic grounds."[2]

A case in point was the decision by the Journal News newspaper in New York to publish a map with the names and addresses of gun permit holders in its coverage area. After a public outcry, the state legislature approved a bill allowing permit holders to request confidentiality, and the newspaper took down the map.[3]

Just because something is legal doesn't mean it's also ethical. Is it our job as journalists to give the public easy access to information that's rightfully theirs? Or do we need to act as gatekeepers on some level in order to protect the public? It's a tough call and one that journalists must routinely make by weighing the importance of telling the truth against the potential for causing harm.

Searchable Data and Documents

Posting original data lets users see the information a story is built from, but it's much more engaging if you make the data sortable and searchable. When KHOU-TV in Houston reported that drivers in Texas weren't getting what they paid for at the gas pump, the story linked to a database users could search by zip code to see if their gas station was among those that had failed a state inspection. KOMO-TV in Seattle discovered that thousands of videos recorded by police dashboard cameras had vanished from the city's archive. The station created a database of the missing videos so users could search for records that might have pertained to cases they were involved in.

Some database projects are quite elaborate, giving users the ability to search using multiple parameters. USA Today built a searchable database of American casualties in Afghanistan and Iraq to give users a personal view of the wars' costs as well as a statistical view. "People tend to want to find stuff that's sort of about them," says Josh Hatch, who helped produce the project. The interactive let users sort the casualty list by gender, race, age, hometown and other demographic information to find out if anyone who died is "kind of like me."

Including original documents with an online story can bolster its credibility and offer users the chance to see the context of selected quotes. To make it easier for users to navigate long documents, many newsrooms use a tool like DocumentCloud, which allows journalists to add highlights and notes before posting. When the University of North Carolina released thousands of documents related to an investigation of academic fraud, WRAL-TV in Raleigh, North Carolina, used DocumentCloud to let users find specific information by key word or by individuals' names.

Reporter S. P. Sullivan uses DocumentCloud all the time at NJ.com. "It's a way of building trust with the audience," he says. "I am saying to them: *Don't just take my word for it. Here, look: facts!*"[4]

KNOW AND TELL
THE POWER OF GRAPHICS

Take clean and accurate data, strong visualization and excellent writing and you get some of the most powerful reporting available. Sarah Frostenson has the job title of graphics editor at Politico but she's really a new breed of digital storyteller.

"Graphics editor is very similar to the graphics reporter role," Frostenson said. "It involves identifying useful data sets, building out visuals and doing the reporting and writing for it. That's a shift in the field; journalists are now both building the interactive and doing the writing."

Frostenson graduated from Dartmouth in 2011 with a BA in history and a minor in environmental studies, but she now focuses primarily on health and science reporting. Before Politico, she was a graphics reporter at Vox. One of the stories she's most proud of producing involved visualizing the challenges faced by consumers who wanted to participate in Obamacare. The graphic broke down the number of insurance providers available state-by-state and county-by-county, showing users what would happen if the system created by the health care law imploded.

For Frostenson, the power of graphics is two-fold: explanatory and exploratory.

"We are creating more stories where the chart stands on its own. It's not just something inserted into a text story," Frostenson says. Graphics can also be interactive, so they're immersive and exploratory.

Frostenson says she most often uses JavaScript, Python and SQL databases to do her work, but she says there are plenty of third-party tools, like Tableau and CartoDB, that may be more accessible to novices.

"Start in Excel and when you're ready to get more visual and more interested in design, then you want to try Tableau and then learn basic JavaScript," Frostenson said. "And there are a lot of terrific data reporters who don't build visualizations at all, but they can identify trends and work well with developers."

Frostenson says it's not unusual to work as part of a team producing interactives and the best team members will be those who have a basic understanding of the power of data and visualizations.

"It's where journalism is headed in some ways. We're now better able to fact check by looking at reliable data, and so you need to have fluency in data analysis."

Source: Courtesy of Sarah Frostenson.

Students at the University of Illinois used DocumentCloud in a project examining local restaurant health inspections for the online news site CU-Citizen Access. By adding notes to a sample inspection report, the project helped users understand how restaurants are scored.

Source: "Restaurant Failure Inspections," CU-Citizen Access, http://cu-citizenaccess.org/interactive/restaurant-failure-inspections (accessed July 12, 2013).

Charts and Tables

When you're working with a large data set, you can help the audience better understand more of the story if you create an interactive graphic to visualize the numbers. There are a number of free, online data visualization tools available, including Infogram and Tableau Public. These and other graphic generators allow you to produce shareable, embeddable interactive graphics using templates that help your content look good.

When the politics site Politico wrote a series of articles about the Catalan independence movement, they used pictorial charts, icons, emojis, area charts, stacked bar graphs and maps to illustrate the history of Catalonia and what Catalan secession could mean for Spain. It's a complicated story and with this graphic, they were able to add context in a memorable and easy to consume way.

Tables are a great way to easily organize information that calls for comparison. For an exploration of the various smart home assistants available to consumers, the technology news site TechCrunch broke down the options by price, release date and other features. They uploaded icons of each product for quick reference and turned what could have been a boring list of stats into a shareable article. Another free tool, Wordle, can make word clouds for highlighting key topics in a block of text such as a speech.

TRADE TOOLS
INFOGRAPHIC TIPS

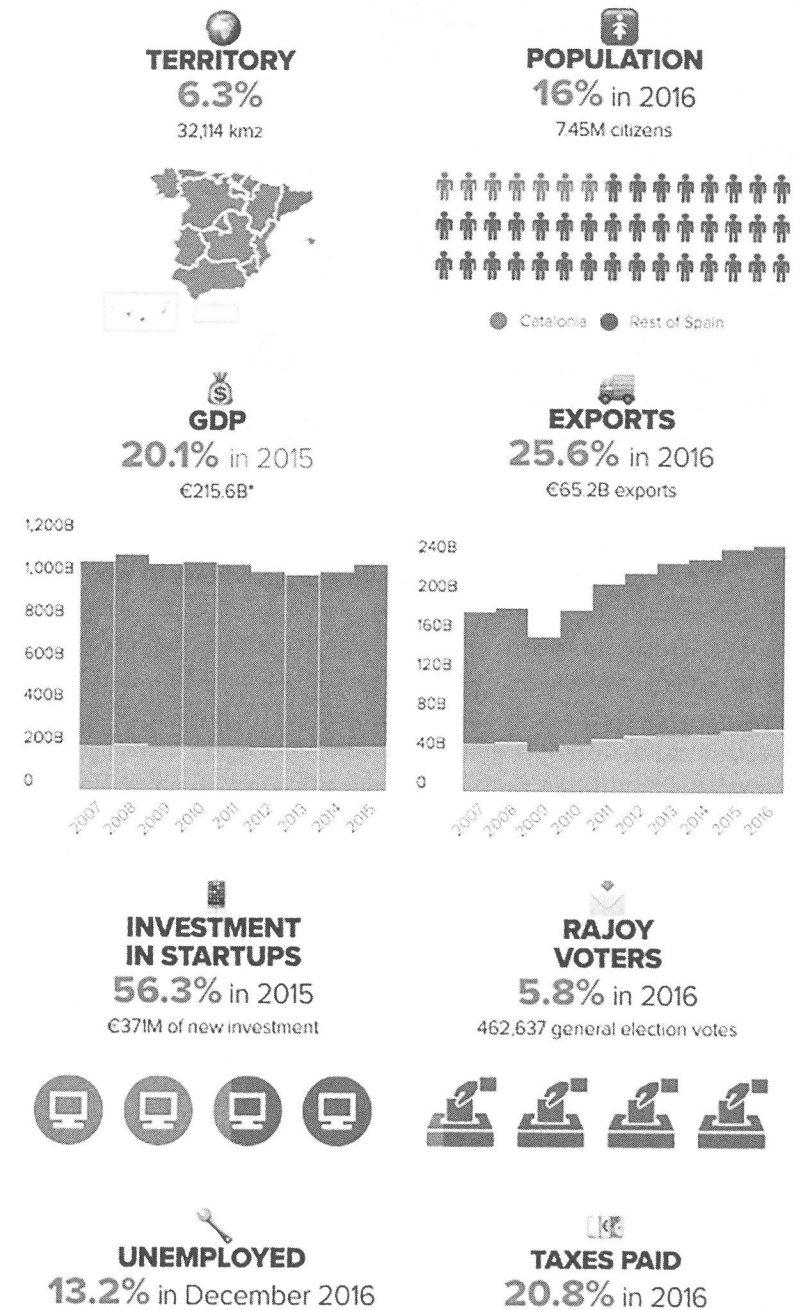To make a strong, interactive infographic, you should consider these five key points:

1. Think about the audience. What do you hope they will learn from your visualization?

2. Make sure the design tells the story. View your infographic without any supporting text. Does it still make sense?

3. Think vertical. Most viewers will start at the top and work their way down. Does your infographic flow well from top to bottom?

4. Consider your font. Avoid using script or other decorative type. Is your infographic text easy to read?

5. Use a simple color scheme. People will be looking for meaning in the color choices. Do the colors support the infographic's message or do they create confusion?

Memes

A popular way to promote engagement with graphics, especially on Facebook, is to create interactive memes, which are specifically designed to be shared. For example, KPHO-TV in Phoenix asked fans to indicate what they wanted to see happen with federal healthcare

CATALONIA'S SHARE OF SPAIN

Percentage that the independence-seeking region represents of the country's …

TERRITORY
6.3%
32,114 km2

POPULATION
16% in 2016
7.45M citizens

● Catalonia ● Rest of Spain

GDP
20.1% in 2015
€215.6B*

EXPORTS
25.6% in 2016
€65.2B exports

INVESTMENT IN STARTUPS
56.3% in 2015
€371M of new investment

RAJOY VOTERS
5.8% in 2016
462,637 general election votes

UNEMPLOYED
13.2% in December 2016

TAXES PAID
20.8% in 2016

This graphic on Politico.com helped explain the complicated history of Catalan and Spain and the potential impact of Catalan's secession by visualizing the large amounts of data that underpinned the site's reporting.

Source: "What Spain has to lose from Catalan independence," Politico.com, https://www.politico.eu/article/catalonia-independence-referendum-what-spain-has-to-lose/ (accessed November 26, 2017).

A meme, created by WLOX-TV in Biloxi, Mississippi, about fall reached more than 316,000 people and was shared 4,457 times. The station's digital producer says this kind of engagement helps boost other posts on the page and the shares will help the station reach an audience beyond their existing followers.

Source: Facebook/@WLOX-TV.

legislation by clicking on "like" to amend Obamacare, "love" to keep Obamacare and "wow" to draft a new bill. This interactive generated more than 800 reactions and more than 100 comments.

Memes don't have to be serious to have value, says Brad Conaway, corporate digital content manager for Raycom Media. Meteorologist Wes Callison at KOLD-TV in Tucson, Arizona, created a meme for Facebook about the temperature hitting 90 degrees in November, which was shared just under 1,400 times.

"The value of memes for a news organization is two-fold," Conaway says. "It can help you determine what your audience really cares about, based on the engagement of the meme, or results of a meme poll. Secondly, by increasing the engagement on your page, memes help show Facebook that your audience values your page in their news feed, thereby increasing your value in the algorithm."

Conaway says that since memes are personality driven, they're ideally suited for news personalities to express themselves and speak directly and immediately to the audience.

"Building a vibrant rapport with your community is the key to digital success. They're more likely to turn to you when there's breaking news, severe weather, and when they have a news tip to share."

When it comes to building memes, Conaway says Pablo by Buffer is a free and easy meme maker. It includes about 600,000 searchable, public domain images that you can use. You can also upload your own images and Conaway says the tools and features are extremely easy to use.

A word of warning, though, about memes. Claire Wardle leads strategy and research at First Draft, a nonprofit coalition with a stated goal of trying to raise awareness and address

challenges relating to trust and truth in the digital age. She says memes are often a "response from an audience who doesn't feel like they're being listened to, so they create their own content." Rather than creating their own memes, she believes newsrooms need to understand what's driving people to develop and share memes and use that knowledge to inform their coverage of the issues involved.[5]

IMAGES

Photos are a key element in most multimedia stories. On the web, individual photos can be embedded to illustrate or draw interest to different aspects of a story, or to introduce characters. Images can also be combined into a photo gallery or slideshow. At their best, galleries and slideshows tell a coherent story; they're not just a collection of interesting pictures in some random order. Slideshows are increasingly found in social media and often incorporate video in with the still images. Snapchat, Instagram and Twitter, for example, allow you to combine still and moving images to create what is essentially a slideshow.

Whether online or on social media, slideshows typically put the user in the driver's seat. The producer decides what order to put the images in; the user decides how long to view an image and when to move forward. Most slideshows will include text captions. Others are produced with an audio track, which can include narration, sound bites and natural sound. Audio slideshows are essentially videos created from still images.

Combining Images

Using images to tell a bigger story requires thinking in sequences, says Paul Bradshaw, a digital journalist and educator, who writes the Online Journalism Blog (https://online journalismblog.com/). He says this need to think about sequences is partly a result of Snapchat's "move from scroll-based navigation to navigating through a swipe or a tap"—a development that's been incorporated into Instagram Stories and Twitter Moments, too.

In addition to ordering elements into a coherent narrative, Bradshaw says creators must now think about variety.

"In traditional television terms, that means aiming to include a variety of shots (close up, wide shot, and so on), but on a platform like Twitter or Instagram that also means variety of media: still image, video, gif, text. You can call this the element of surprise: Repeat the same type of content too often, and the story becomes predictable; there is less narrative tension. More variety, in contrast, keeps the user engaged."[6]

Building Slideshows

It's relatively easy to build a simple slideshow. Macs come preloaded with iMovie, and most video editing software programs such as Adobe Premiere and Final Cut Pro have excellent slideshow-generating features. In addition, web publishing systems in many

SLIDESHOW: Wintry weather delivers snow day deep into the South

Posted: Dec 08, 2017 8:53 AM CST
Updated: Dec 08, 2017 11:18 AM CST

By WALA Webstaff

| Deep South wintry weather | | START | SHARE | 1/33 |

WINTRY WEATHER
Dec 8, 2017 08:27 AM
Hattiesburg, Miss. (Photo: Mick Ward, FOX10 News)

WALA-TV, the FOX affiliate in Mobile, Alabama, created a slideshow of winter weather scenes after a rare snow fall in the Deep South.

Source: "SLIDESHOW: Wintry weather delivers snow day deep into the South," fox10tv.com, http://www.fox10tv.com/story/37024648/photos-wintry-weather-reaches-deep-into-the-south (accessed December 9, 2017).

newsrooms have built-in slideshow generators that allow you to upload and order photos directly on the website.

To add variety to a slideshow, you can add movement to individual photos, panning or zooming the way documentary producer Ken Burns does in bringing archival images to life for his public television specials. But beware of overdoing it. Movement can enhance photos, but it can also be a distraction. Think about producing a slideshow in segments, alternating a few still photos in a row with a group of images to which you have added movement. Choose the photos to which you add movement carefully, so there is a purpose for each movement. A zoom in can highlight a portion of a photo, while a zoom out or pan can reveal additional elements in a photo.

Adding Text

Captions and hyperlinks can give slideshows depth and context that nat sound stories on TV often lack. Good slideshow captions often convey more information than photo captions, which we discussed in Chapter 6, because a slideshow can be a self-contained story. Because many online slideshows are posted separately from related material, they have to stand up on their own. So a slideshow caption not only tells viewers what they are looking at but can add considerably more background.

Freelance photographer Daniel Berehulak won a Pulitzer Prize for a photo essay in the New York Times about the war on drugs in the Philippines. Each photograph in "They Are Slaughtering Us Like Animals" had a caption that told a complete story, not only identifying the people in the image but putting it in context.
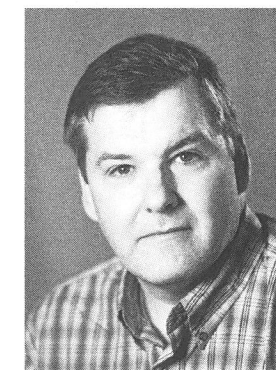
TRADE TOOLS
AUDIO SLIDESHOWS

Colin Mulvany is an experienced producer of audio slideshows for the Spokesman-Review newspaper in Spokane, Washington. He's found that using a video editing program makes the process go more smoothly. Here are some of his best tips:

- Build as you go. As I assemble my story, I tend to build as I go. I start editing at the beginning with audio, then layer on my photos.

- See the whole picture. One of the nice things about producing audio slideshows in a video editor is the ability to display multiple photos at once in the viewer. This solves the vertical photo issue of trying to fill a horizontal space with a vertical rectangle. I like to fade in my vertical photos on the far left or right of my frame then fade in another image to fill the rest of the frame.

- Cuts work best. Most of the time, I just use quick cuts between photos. It took me awhile to break the cross fade habit, but now I see how much better a show flows without all that cross fading. It also makes it easier to edit to a beat in the audio.

- Think in sequences. I tend to edit an audio slideshow like I edit a video story. I try to use sequences of images that help move the story through time and place. I try to mix up

the photo selection by using a mix of wide, medium and tight shots just like I do with video.

- Use motion on photos with caution. Most of the time, slower is better. You don't want to make the viewer

Source: Photo courtesy of Colin Mulvany. Adapted from http://masteringmultimedia.wordpress.com/2011/02/27/producing-audio-slideshows-with-final-cut-pro.

seasick. Try not to zigzag all over the place. Use motion on a photo to reveal or isolate something that pertains to the story. I like to put a very slow pull or push on a photo that is almost not noticeable. It adds just a little kick to a static photo. One last suggestion on using motion with photos: If you are pulling out on a photo and your next image has motion too, make that one zoom in; otherwise it makes the viewer feel like they are heading through a tunnel.

When using captions in a slideshow that also includes audio, be mindful of how the user will absorb the information. You might want to pause the audio track as captions are
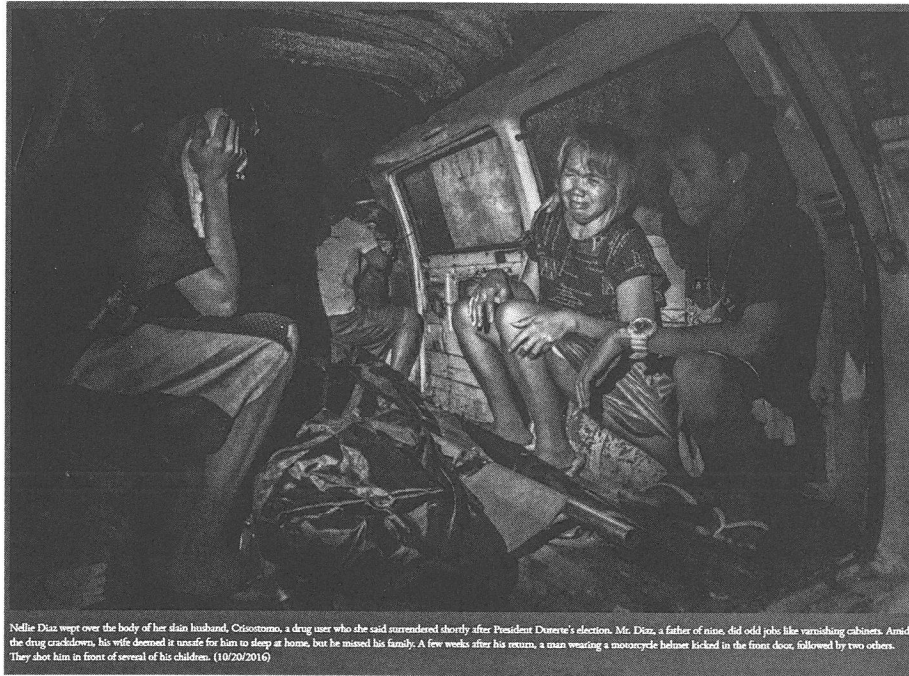
Nellie Diaz wept over the body of her slain husband, Crisostomo, a drug user who she said surrendered shortly after President Duterte's election. Mr. Diaz, a father of nine, did odd jobs like varnishing cabinets. Amid the drug crackdown, his wife deemed it unsafe for him to sleep at home, but he missed his family. A few weeks after his return, a man wearing a motorcycle helmet kicked in the front door, followed by two others. They shot him in front of several of his children. (10/20/2016)

Well-written captions for a slideshow or online photo essay should add more background and context than a still photo caption. The caption for this image from a New York Times photo essay about drug-related killings in the Philippines not only names the people in the photo—the weeping woman and her dead husband—but tells what the man did for a living and how he was murdered in front of his family. This type of detail allows a slideshow or photo essay to stand on its own.

Source: "The 2017 Pulitzer Prize Winner in Breaking News Photography," Pulitzer.org. http://www.pulitzer.org/winners/daniel-berehulak-freelance-photographer (accessed December 11, 2017).

revealed so the users' attention isn't divided between what they're hearing and what they're trying to read. Or you might choose to show captions only when the user mutes the audio, or when the user decides to navigate the slideshow one frame at a time rather than let it play automatically.

SOCIAL MEDIA STORYTELLING

The brevity of most social media posts makes them ideal for sharing bits of information quickly but not always for telling stories, certainly not stories with any depth. The good news is that it's easier than ever to curate stories using social media, combining a series of tweets or images to tell a more complete story to your followers. Platforms often introduce new features for major publishers first and then roll them out to everyone else, so you can expect these options to change over time.

Linked Posts

On Twitter, many journalists cover stories in linked tweets, sometimes called "tweet storms." By replying to your own tweets, you can create a narrative that's easy to follow. Users can also write multiple tweets one after the other and send them all at the same time. Twitter calls tweets connected like this a "thread," and includes a "show this thread" icon so users know there is more to read. Twitter "moments" are another way to link posts—yours and anyone else's you choose—plus images and videos. Twitter recommends keeping moments to 10 items or fewer. Each moment needs a title and ideally a cover photo that will entice people to swipe for more. Moments show up in their creators' feeds and they're embeddable so you can share them outside the Twitter platform.

On Facebook, some news organizations use the comments feature to add more context and background to stories. They can share links to additional stories on the same subject produced by their news organization or others. Links including images or video stand out in the comments stream, helping to draw attention to the additional information being provided.

Visual Stories

One image may be captivating but you might need more than one to tell the whole story. Facebook allows for multiple images to be included in the same post. After you've uploaded them, you can drag and drop them into the order you want displayed. The first image will be the largest. Facebook automatically creates a collage layout for the first few, and indicates how many more are included in the post. Because you'll be asking users to click through to see the additional photos, make it worth their time. Use only the strongest images that will add to the user's understanding of the story. Be sure to caption each image, in case it's shared separately from the original post.

Instagram has a slideshow function baked into the app. Up to 10 photos or videos can be combined into one post, all connected to one caption. After uploading, drag and drop the images into the order you want them displayed. Again, be selective about the images you choose. If you get in the habit of boring your followers, they may not come back.

Snapchat can be used to tell stories that unfold over time, so followers can see developments as they're added, incorporating images, video and text. Much like a slideshow, the user decides when to advance to the next element. Instagram has a feature it calls "Stories," which is similar to Snapchat. As we noted, verified users can embed links in images in stories, which you can't do with a single Instagram image. Like Snapchat, the stories are only available for 24 hours unless they're downloaded and shared outside the app.

To combine content from several social platforms, consider an app like Wakelet. Connect it to your social media accounts, and you can pull in tweets, Facebook posts, Instagram photos, links and more. Add text to provide context and transitions, much as you would add narration to a TV package. The end result can be shared on social media and embedded anywhere. The tool is particularly useful for telling stories that have originated or gone viral on social media.

NBC News invested in Snapchat as a way to reach a younger demographic. The network produces a 2- to 3-minute newscast for the social channel called "Stay Tuned," which is designed to work vertically with bold graphics and lots of text. This story about a volcano eruption in Bali had just three "snaps" and lasted less than ten seconds.

Source: Snapchat, "Stay Tuned," NBC News. Captured via mobile device November 27, 2017.

TRADE TOOLS
SNAPCHAT STORIES

Snapchat has more daily users than Twitter, attracts a younger audience (users are mostly under 26) and is consumed on mobile devices only. Why is it so popular? There's no "posting pressure," says former CNN photojournalist Bethany Swain, who now teaches at the University of Maryland. Unlike Facebook, which regularly reminds users of what they posted years before, a Snapchat is automatically deleted after 24 hours so the content doesn't have to be the best. It's also designed to be used with filters and emojis, which is how younger users like to communicate. The app is immediate and designed to be social. "Chat" is what Snapchat is all about.

Telling a Snapchat story requires careful planning, Swain says. Story elements are posted in real time, so there's no going back to add text or effects or to insert a "snap" earlier in a sequence. Vertical video used to be laughed at by many broadcast journalists, but now they're embracing best practices for producing vertical content and recognizing how it's different from TV.

1. **Framing**. Think ahead about what text you will add to your scene. Snapchat makes it easy to add "geotags" like date, time or temperature, as well as captions that can be typed or handwritten along with arrows or other graphics. Shots need to be framed to allow for any other elements you plan to add.

2. **Sequencing**. Just as in a video story, Snapchat stories should have a beginning, middle and end, and should avoid jump cuts. But because you build the story in real time, you have to remember what you've posted and make sure the next element works with the one before it.

3. **Editing**. Snapchat stories may include stills and video, each of which can last for up to to 10 seconds, but the producer doesn't control story pacing. The viewer does. Be aware that a viewer can click through a story at his or her own speed, advancing when ready or going back to see the story again from the start.

LIVE BLOGS

One way to cover a story as it unfolds is to blog it live, either on social media like Twitter using a dedicated hashtag, or on a live-blogging platform that can be embedded in a website. It's the online, social or mobile equivalent of live broadcast coverage, allowing you to post updates quickly on fast-moving developments.

Live blogs don't work for everything. They're best suited to single-subject stories of major interest to a large audience happening within a defined period of time, like a sporting event, a trial or severe weather.

Story Approach

A live blog by definition is not a polished narrative. It's a stream of raw material, posted in chronological order. It often includes photos and video, but the heart of most live blog coverage is a series of brief text entries. "It's a form that's charming in its directness," says Neil McIntosh, now managing editor of BBC Online. "At its best it generally does away with any writerly conceits, and demands the author just get on with telling you what's just happened."[7]

Even so, preparation is just as critical for live blogging as it is for live broadcast coverage. "When you choose to cover a story live, you have to already have a lot of context ready," says Juliette Hollier-Larousse, video director at AFP-TV.[8] And because live blogs typically are read in reverse chronological order with the most recent developments first, it can be helpful to summarize the story and recap important points several times as the story unfolds.

Pros and Cons

Live blogging can be an effective way of engaging an audience as a story develops. News organizations say web traffic often spikes for live blogs, with users posting comments and questions. Those comments may add to the coverage, but they can also

(CHEERS)

DONALD TRUMP

Thank you very much.

PAUL RYAN

Members of Congress, I have the high privilege and the distinct honor of presenting to you the President of the United States.

(APPLAUSE)

DONALD TRUMP

Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, members of Congress, the first lady of the United States.

(APPLAUSE)

And citizens of America, tonight, as we mark the conclusion of our celebration of black history month, we are reminded of our nation's path toward civil rights and the work that still remains to be done. Recent threats —

> President Trump began his speech with a nod to the civil rights movement and Black History Month, using markedly different rhetoric from his campaign. In the months leading up to the election, Trump began asking the rhetorical question to black voters — in front of overwhelmingly white audiences — "What the hell do you have to lose?" He painted a picture of black neighborhoods as wracked with poverty, crime and schools that are "no good," as he put it. Trump's words were roundly criticized by many African-American leaders as insensitive and an unfair portrayal of their communities. Despite that criticism, Trump outperformed 2012 GOP nominee Mitt Romney among black voters. In his speech to Congress, the president struck a gentler, more conciliatory tone.
>
> Sarah McCammon
> NPR Politics Reporter/Covers Trump

Next annotation ▼

NPR reporters annotated a speech by President Donald Trump in real-time using a live blog. This approach can be valuable in helping audiences understand the context of a story in the moment, and NPR is one of many news organizations using this tool. During the 2018 State of the Union address, news organizations including the Washington Post, NBC News and Slate used live blogs for fact-checking the president's statements. The Post, for example, added analysis and clarifying information to the blog 19 times during the hour-long speech.

Source: "Trump's Address To Joint Session Of Congress, Annotated," npr.org, https://www.npr.org/2017/02/28/516717981/watch-live-trump-addresses-joint-session-of-congress (accessed December 9, 2017).

introduce confusion and error, requiring reporters to clarify and correct while also tracking the story, making their jobs more difficult. At The Guardian newspaper, former readers' editor Chris Elliott says live blogging has become their go-to way of telling major stories but he adds, "Live blogs need to be written with care and restraint or they can appear too breathless."[9]

TRADE TOOLS
LIVE-BLOGGING TIPS

1. Prepare as much as possible. Know the names (and Twitter handles) of anyone likely to be involved. Create image templates in advance.

2. Let your followers know. Tell people in advance that you're planning live coverage so they can tune in (or out).

3. Use the right hashtag(s). If there is an official hashtag, use it. Watch for hashtags gaining popularity during the event and add or switch to them.

4. Mix it up. Don't just post photos or tweet quotes. Post multiple types of content, if possible.

5. Make every post count. Share the most memorable moments. Be selective about what you choose to post and use the highest-quality images or videos possible.

Source: Adapted from Lauren Dugan, "10 Tips for Tweeting During Live Events," AdWeek.com, July 11, 2015, http://www.adweek.com/digital/10-tips-for-tweeting-during-live-events/ and Sarah Dawley, "5 Things You Need to Know to Successfully Live-Tweet an Event," Hootsuite.com, July 8, 2016, https://blog.hootsuite.com/how-to-live-tweet/.

Reporters who frequently live blog say the discipline of filing brief updates helps them report differently. They look for details they would never include in a finished narrative but that add a sense of presence to a live blog. "Your powers of observation are doubled and tripled when you live blog," says Associated Press reporter Ben Walker, who often live blogs sports events. "You might look at a situation in a different way, and you might listen for a different type of quote."[10] One downside of live blogging is that it divides a reporter's attention. It can be difficult to pay close attention to an ongoing story while simultaneously writing and filing, so you risk missing important developments. Writing fast during breaks in the action can mitigate that concern.

KNOW AND TELL
CROSS-PLATFORM STORYTELLING

"It's two jobs in one." That's how David Bienick described what it's like to work at a major market television station these days, filing stories for air as well as the web and mobile. At WCVB-TV in Boston, Bienick not only reports for the station's newscasts, he feeds Twitter, files web stories and posts video and photos to Facebook.

"I went to college for broadcast journalism," Bienick says. "I never learned print. When they started asking us to do web stories, I imitated what I saw on the wires and in the newspaper."

Bienick quickly learned that what works in a TV script doesn't work as well online. "A web story needs a more direct attack or lead, with the most

(Continued)

(Continued)

Source: Photo courtesy of David Bienick.

important information at the top. Man-on-the-street interviews work really poorly on the web. They don't add context as they do on TV."

On the other hand, phone interviews that are mostly worthless for TV are great for web use. "If a person can't do a TV interview, I still ask a couple of questions and jot down quotes for my web story," Bienick says. "It's not wasted time."

Bienick used to work at KCRA-TV in Oakland, California, and as mobile became a greater emphasis for his station, Bienick's work day changed again. Instead of posting brief web updates around midday in an effort to reach office workers, he filed more complete stories to reach people checking news on their mobiles near the end of the work day.

"I use Twitter as if I am a wire service," Bienick says. "At a breaking news story, I'm fast and furious, tweeting 10 to 20 times in a row, and then you won't hear from me for 24 hours. I tweet whenever I learn something. I tweet pictures."

Doing all of that requires good use of time. "Don't waste any," Bienick says. In transit, he logs sound bites, works on his web story or tweets a photo.

His best advice to anyone wanting a job in the news business? Be flexible. "It's going to change dramatically. In five years, I have no idea what we're going to be doing."

MOBILE STORYTELLING

It's often difficult to make a distinction between social and mobile content because so much of the content consumed on mobile devices is published first to social media sites. However, tablets and smartphones have given journalists additional ways of telling stories using the elements of multimedia journalism with even more user engagement. Because these devices are equipped with touch screens, "You must keep the finger happy," says Garcia Media's Mario Garcia. "You should be able to click on an image or photograph for more information, or for a video." A study of tablet users conducted by the Poynter Institute found they kept almost constant contact with the screen when viewing stories, swiping, tapping and pinching.[11]

Smartphone Specifics

Many news organizations have mobile distribution strategies but most journalists working in local news outlets are not yet producing separate versions of their stories specifically for mobile devices. However, that day may come, along with its challenges, says Colleen Wilson, executive director for interactives at KQED, the public TV and radio station in San Francisco, which is already producing mobile-specific content. "We had to learn a completely new way to tell a story," she told an Online News Association conference. "We had to learn how to distill that story down into the most important nugget and also to uncouple it from a narrative."[12] Building content for mobile audiences requires you to reduce complexity and create efficient experiences, says Damon Kiesow, former senior project manager for mobile at Boston.com, who now holds the title of Head of Product for McClatchy.[13]

When telling a story for a smartphone user, optimize all content for the size of the screen. Emily Bowe, who reported for the University of North Carolina's Reese Felts digital news project, made sure every paragraph of text in her story on wind energy would fit on an iPhone screen (the smallest mobile device). She also was selective about still photos, using vertical or square formats only, "since horizontal photos would appear very small on the phone screen." The podcast in Bowe's project was just over 20 minutes, "about the average length of a commute in the United States, meaning that people can listen to it in the car or when walking or running."[14] Keep all of these factors in mind when telling stories on mobile devices.

Including images is just as critical for user engagement on smartphones as it is on social media. The BBC tested a mobile-first strategy that required stories for mobile to include an image per swipe. They found that readership went up by 20 percent.[15]

KNOW AND TELL
MOBILE MUSTS

Ron Yaros has been researching and teaching about mobile journalism at the University of Maryland since 2011. He's recently been building a list of story elements that he's found to generate engagement for mobile stories.

- Use an explanatory headline; don't make it vague.

- Include a summary of the story highlights for scanners.

- Subheads should be declarative sentences rather than titles to inform scanners who won't read the text.

- Combine a photo with the first paragraph.

- Chunk all paragraphs into two or three sentences and offer "read more" for those who might want it.

- Embed short videos (:30 or less) throughout the text instead of one long video package.

Based on an article published on MediaShift, http://mediashift.org/2017/05/mobile-journalism-isnt-just-producing-content-its-knowing-how-mobile-content-affects-engagement/ (accessed November 26, 2017).

Video Apps

Despite the unique formats and features of social and mobile video, 16:9 video is not dead on those platforms. Videolicious is a mobile app that is widely used by local TV stations, including those owned by Tegna and Raycom. The technology allows journalists to quickly record a stand-up or narration and visuals within the app, edit them together by dragging and dropping the images in order and then publishing the story within minutes to social and other digital platforms.

CNN has one of the most popular mobile news apps in the U.S. and University of Maryland researcher Ron Yaros thinks part of the reason is that the organization understands how to format content for handheld devices. Note the headline that tells you exactly what the story is about, a photo to catch your attention, a summary blurb providing a few more details followed by the first of several bullet points to give you the highlights of the story.

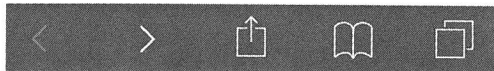*Source:* CNN.com, retrieved via mobile device November 27, 2017.
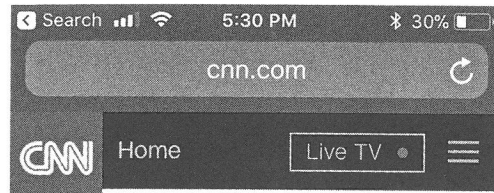
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>
> # CBO: Poor Americans would lose on tax bill
>
> **Those earning less than $40,000 a year would be worse off with the GOP tax plan, CBO says**
>
> Analysis: Inside the Republican tax trap
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Reporters at WHAM-TV, the ABC affiliate in Rochester, New York, use Videolicious in the field to help add production value to the videos they post on Facebook. "It allows the reporter to take stills and b-roll and edit it together, in the field, on the phone, to get a polished-looking report out pretty frequently on Facebook," said Seth Palmer, WHAM's digital content director.

The station credits the app with helping it lead the market in social media engagement.[16]

Other apps that make it easy to share additional multimedia elements to the digital audience include Facebook Live and Twitter's Periscope, which allow journalists in the field to quickly share a live look at a scene or an important update on a developing story. To refresh yourself on best practices for live streaming, refer back to Chapter 5.

Immersive Storytelling

New apps and technologies that create scrolling narratives, 360 visuals, virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) have the potential to bring audiences into the heart of a story. For the purposes of this text, we define virtual reality as a digital simulation of a three-dimensional environment that you can interact with in what feels like a real way. Augmented reality takes your view of the real world and adds digital information and/or data on top of it. Both VR and AR require you to wear some sort of headset or goggles to give you the full user experience.

True VR or AR content is difficult to create and is typically produced by teams within news organizations, but 360 images and video are much more accessible, allowing individual journalists to dip their toes in the waters of immersive storytelling using smartphones and free tools or with equipment that is relatively inexpensive to buy.

Scrolling Stories

News organizations have done some amazing multimedia work in recent years, creating immersive long-form narratives. It's sometimes called "Snowfall" design, named for a project the New York Times produced in 2012. Others call it "scrollytelling." The word is a combination of "storytelling" and "scrolling," and refers to online multimedia content that unfolds as you scroll down the page. Following the election of President Donald Trump, the Times adding scrolling to an interactive map, illustrating how voting patterns had changed since the last election. As users scroll, text boxes appear along the way to guide them through the visual changes.

Journalists who know code can use tools such as Waypoints and ScrollStory to create simple scrollytelling content, but most often scrollytelling refers to long-form, very visual content, such as The Guardian's "Firestorm," which tells the story of a bushfire that devastated the town of Dunalley in Australia. The story brings together long-form writing, video documentary and other interactive elements.

These more elaborate projects can be very labor intensive and require a hefty time commitment, so they are less common than many other forms of multimedia.

But not all scrolling stories need to be elaborate. Adobe has a free tool called Spark that allows anyone to create a scrolling narrative, using photos, video, text and links. The finished product made public on Adobe's site but it can also be embedded or shared via direct link. Spark pages are particularly suited to telling stories built around memorable images.

360 Images

If you want to quickly provide your audience with an immersive scene setter, there may be few better multimedia elements than a 360 photo. There are a number of free apps for smartphones that allow you to create an image, upload and share it to social platforms in less than five minutes. Two of the most popular are Panorama 360 and Google Street View.

> The New York Times | U.S. → Share
>
> # How Trump Reshaped the Election Map
>
> NOV. 9, 2016
>
> Red arrows show how much Donald J. Trump surpassed Mitt Romney in counties across the United States.
>
> SCROLL TO START ↓

The New York Times used the concept of "scrollytelling" to guide users through a graphic that illustrated the change in voting patterns from 2012 to 2016. As the audience scrolls down, the map changes and additional details are revealed.

Source: https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/11/08/us/elections/how-trump-pushed-the-election-map-to-the-right.html? (accessed December 9, 2017).

In addition to their use in social media, news organizations like CBC Television in Canada have also embedded Street View images on a website to provide a unique perspective with a story. For example, the CBC did a piece about a hugely popular new restaurant and captured two 360 photos inside to let the audience have a look around at their own pace. The images received more than 100,000 views.

The New York Times has used Street View to illustrate the "before and after" of a natural disaster by finding 360 images of a location published previously by a member of the public and then taking a new 360 from the same location after a disaster occurred. One of the most powerful the paper produced offered a perspective on the damage done by an earthquake to a sacred temple in Nepal.

360 Video

Producing 360 video continues to get easier, too, with easy-to-use and relatively inexpensive tools coming on the market regularly. One tool, the Insta360, attaches to your smartphone and allows you to capture 360 images or video and upload it quickly and directly to social media or download it to a computer for more complex editing.

For those interested in higher-end 360 video, there are dozens of cameras available and nonlinear editing systems such as Adobe Premiere are now capable of handling the format. For instance, KTVB-TV in Boise, Idaho, used its GoPro Omni to capture 360 video of a base jumper trying to set a record jumping off the Perrine Bridge in Twin Falls.

"We've seen base jumping with a traditional camera but you didn't get that gut punch of standing on the edge of this bridge that's 400 feet up over a river until you put the 360 camera right on his head or in his hand and then you kind of get the vertigo feeling of being right there on the edge of this massive drop," Xanti Alcelay, director of photography for the station, says. "And so those are the types of stories where you want to be that person rather than just show that person. And that's what we're trying to find."

Alcelay, who's been a videographer at KTVB for 20 years, says learning to use the gear isn't easy.

"It is more technically advanced and complicated," Alcelay says. "Six cameras are shooting in a 4:3 frame. They're shooting in a circle, a sphere, and you use a program that GoPro provides to stitch them together."

It can take up to three days to produce a single story because the video files are huge and they need to be rendered and color corrected before they're stitched, but Alcelay is certain that 360 is here to stay and will only get easier to navigate. "I have no doubt that they're going to come up with a better way to do everything," he said, "because there's going to be an increased demand for this type of journalism and this type of photography."[17]

Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality

Using virtual or augmented reality gives journalists the ability to tell stories that help the audience experience rather than simply consume news. The Guardian's VR project "6×9," for example, focused on what it's like to live in solitary confinement, in a cell that's just 6

360 VIDEO: Be a wing-man to a lovesick goose

62,863 views

👍 116   👎 16   ➤ SHARE

The first 360 video story KTVB-TV in Boise, Idaho, produced was about a goose that fell in love with a family's car. Xanti Alcelay, director of photography for the station, said it was the perfect debut for the technology because it put you in the driver's seat while the goose was flying right next to you and other cars were coming down the road. The icon in the upper left is the symbol which indicates the video can be viewed in 360 giving the user the ability to change the perspective of the video at any time.

Source: YouTube.com, https://www .youtube.com/ watch?v=dgcjAtvZoFk (accessed November 27, 2017).

feet wide by 9 feet long. That story played to the strengths of the platform. According to a study by Google News Lab, which examined how people interacted with VR stories, people often struggled to remember exact details from VR content and instead recalled the stories in terms of what they felt while they were immersed in the experience. For that reason, VR and AR techniques will likely not be right for every story.

An Associated Press report on the future of augmented journalism found that the best use of AR is to add context to a larger story package that can incorporate more depth and detail through text, graphics and other media. This is also a way of introducing immersive media to audiences more generally. According to the report, a journalist wishing to incorporate AR or VR has three main things to consider:

- What aspect of this story is the most explorable?

- How can I give my audience a perspective that other mediums can't?

- How is my audience going to play with this AR or VR extension?[18]

VR and AR do offer tremendous potential to make important stories resonate with audiences. "With AR, we are not creating a new world. The world is your world and we're just adding to it," says John Keefe, a developer and project manager for Quartz, an online news site. According to Keefe, Quartz's AR coverage of NASA's Cassini spacecraft allowed the user to "place the spacecraft model into their room, walk around it, and get a feel of its actual size." Keefe says the process of prepping a 3D object and having it ready for AR display can take as many as one or two days, so for the time being, AR and VR really aren't tools to use in breaking news.[19]

ETHICS IN ACTION

CONSENT IN 360

Zahra Rasool is the editorial lead for ContrastVR at Al Jazeera Digital. When she and her team went to document Rohingya refugees fleeing persecution in Myanmar, Rasool obtained consent from many people featured in the story. However, Rasool says 360, AR and VR add another layer of complexity to ethical storytelling.

"The 360 view sees everything in its scope, which means that when the camera is set up in a refugee camp in Bangladesh, it has the capacity to capture many more people who haven't given consent," Rasool said. "When we shot 'I Am Rohingya,' whenever people came up to ask what we were doing, we answered honestly. We explained that while the camera was focused on our subject, Jamalida, some of them would be in the shot. Those moments were also key for making

sure we understood that through this film, we were representing an entire community; the need for high-quality, honest reporting was even greater as we were telling a story not only about our subject, but about an entire community."[20]

But what about shooting 360 video in a public place where journalists typically shoot without getting permission from people included in the shots? Do you have a responsibility to inform even people behind you that they are being captured on camera? Would you knowingly use a 360 video that might show an unsuspecting bystander in an awkward or embarrassing light?

New tools and technologies often require multimedia journalists to rethink acceptable practices and it's best to have these discussions in your newsrooms before you're under deadline pressure.

The cameras used to collect 360 images and video may appear to be pointing in only one direction, simply capturing what's right in front of the photojournalist. However, they're obviously designed to record everything going on around and behind the camera as well. At this public rally, there is really no presumption of privacy for the people attending, but can you think of a situation where it would be important to alert everyone in the area to the fact that you were recording in 360?

Source: Courtesy of Ji Hoon Heo.

THE MULTIMEDIA ADVANTAGE

The ability to tell a story in multiple media is a huge advantage for reporters. They can use information in print or online that would never fit in a TV story because of time limitations or the need for visuals. Online graphics can be more detailed than the television versions, and additional video and supporting documents can be posted online to bolster a story's credibility. And reporters say that because stories told in multiple media reach more people, they can pay off in new leads and additional sources.

Multimedia Pluses

Reporter Mark Douglas put the multimedia advantage to work when he learned that parts of the Tampa Bay Sunshine Skyway Bridge were corroding just 10 years after it was built. Over a period of months, Douglas accumulated thousands of pages of technical and engineering records for the stories he eventually reported on WFLA-TV, in the Tampa Tribune newspaper and for tbo.com online. "It was quite a relief to have different ways of telling it to make optimum use of all of that research," he says.

The online story became an outlet for raw video of the corrosion and for documents that didn't work in either the newspaper or TV version. The print version allowed Douglas to explain some of the technical details of the corrosion problem that he couldn't get into on television. "I also had the ability to develop a narrative style of storytelling about events in the corrosion investigation that I couldn't discuss in such detail on TV because I didn't have the pictures and it was just too lengthy," he says.

Telling the story in three dimensions made the topic hard to ignore, held state officials accountable and gave news consumers choices in how they wanted to digest the information, Douglas says. The print story had a wider impact, as well. "Quite frankly, writing a story or two for the Tampa Tribune opened some doors in state government that probably would have remained shut if this had 'just' been a fleeting story in the 6 o'clock news," Douglas says. "Newspapers get the attention of the high and mighty in [the state capital in] Tallahassee in a way local TV can't compete with sometimes."

Multimedia Challenges

One of the toughest things about working more multimedia storytelling into your day is time management. To do a great job of reporting on one platform is challenging enough, but journalists often feel like they're getting spread thinner and thinner and that they can't keep up with all the tools available.

"The first and probably foremost key part of understanding the secret to staying on top of technology and tools is that nobody is on top of technology and tools," said Ren LaForme, who is a digital tools reporter for the Poynter Institute. "It's not something you can know everything about."

LaForme says you can stay on top of what's happening in the field by talking to other journalists in real life or in social media groups, subscribing to newsletters like API's "Need

to Know," and by consuming a lot of news with a critical eye. LaForme remembers seeing a timeline tool from Knight Lab in a story that won a Pulitzer Prize. "If you spend enough time with high quality news media, you'll start to see tech trends and tools appearing in stories."

When choosing which tools to master yourself, LaForme says you need to know your audience and where they are.

"There are way more people on Instagram versus Snapchat, though there's been explosive growth on Snapchat. On the other hand, most people on Snap are very young and we've seen news struggle to get a foothold."

LaForme also says you can't just judge a tool or platform based on its popularity.

"WhatsApp is the biggest social medium in the world, but the fact is most Americans aren't using it. If you're U.S. based, it probably doesn't make a ton of sense to be there. Now, if I were the New York Times' International edition, that's another story."

Most importantly, LaForme says young journalists should be preparing for a lifetime of learning.

"Gone are the days when you learn how to write and keep improving your writing and you know you'll be okay. You're going to be learning a new tool or social network or video gadget every year, month, week of your job. Not knowing how to use it all right off the bat is okay, but you do have to be comfortable knowing how to learn. It's become a culture of what's next, keep learning, keeping moving forward."

TAKING IT HOME

Today's journalists have more avenues than ever to reach a wider audience. Multimedia stories can have more entry points, more layers and more depth. They can be more engaging, using interactive elements that let the audience participate in discovering information for themselves. But as exciting as these presentation options can seem, don't forget this basic truth: It's all about the story.

TALKING POINTS

1. Find a graphic on a news website. Does it make good use of interactivity? How could a different graphic be developed for the same story with more interactive features?

2. Watch a news story shot for vertical consumption. What differences do you see in the piece as compared to what you might expect to find in a 16:9 version? Is the story more or less compelling than what you might expect to see in a traditional story shot for horizontal consumption?

3. Compare a story on a news organization's main website to the same story on its mobile app or mobile website. How is the content presented differently? If the presentation is the same, is it just as effective on both platforms? If not, why not?

ETHICS CHALLENGES

1. Snapchat stories disappear after 24 hours on the platform, but news organizations have traditionally kept archives of the content they publish for several years. What problems might arise if the subject of a Snapchat story believes the content was unethical or defamatory? Does the journalist or the news outlet have an obligation to retain some record of what was published?

2. While publicly available data can be mapped for use on a news organization's website, can you think of any situations in which that might not be a good idea?

ONLINE LEARNING MODULE 9

For chapter exercises, practice tools and additional resources, visit this chapter's online learning module at study.sagepub.com/advancingthestory. You'll find:

- SKILL BUILDING: Follow a video tutorial and create a simple map.

- DISCOVER: Watch a slideshow to learn how to use this storytelling method to best advantage.

- EXPLORE: Visit websites for tutorials on creating interactive graphics.

Also, continue your work on the ONGOING STORY. Enter data in a spreadsheet and build an interactive map.

Image credit: iStock.com/MicrovOne