News Now - Visual Storytelling in the Digital Age 1st edition Green Test Bank

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Instructor's Manual and Test Bank

for

News Now:
Visual Storytelling in the Digital Age

Instructor's Manual prepared by

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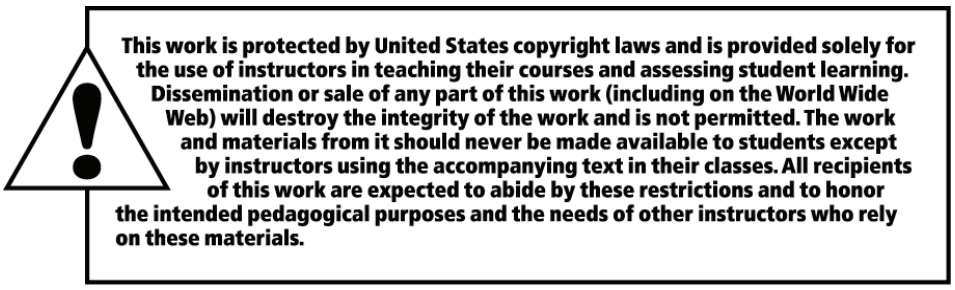
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CHAPTER 1: NEWS NOW

Learning Objectives
In this section, you will help students understand

1. The four traditional values of news that when mastered helps in developing the skills of good news judgment
2. How the new media has impacted and empowered the audience
3. How new technologies impact the streams of information flow so that now news is personal, local, social and mobile
4. Why reporters also need to also be a curator of information and should know the interplay of influence between email, TV, print, text, social media and the Web
5. How every story has a life cycle, some longer than others
6. How each newsroom creates its own culture but the positions and the news cycle are similar in function if not in name
7. How news germinates from a variety of places
8. Why digital and social media require special attention
9. The old methods to determine that audiences are changing across all platforms: radio, television and Web
10. Why traditional journalism ethics must always be on the forefront for the journalist

Chapter Outline

I. News Judgment
   Figure 1.1: News meter
II. The People Formerly Known as the Audience
   Figure 1.2: Accessing/interacting with the news
III. The Web Changes Everything
   Figure 1.3: Web 1.0 versus Web 2.0
   A. Emerging technologies
      Figure 1.4: The new news audience
   B. Streams of information
      Figure 1.5: Customizing the news
IV. Understanding the Flow of Information
   Box: What would you do?
   Box: Vetting information
   Figure 1.6: The flow of information
V. Evolving Stories and Topics
   Figure 1.7: Evolution of breaking/developing news
VI. How a Newsroom Works
VII. Finding News to Report
   A. Major events
   B. Sources
   C. The audience

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D. All media
Box: Find the news!
VIII. Rules for Digital and Social Media
IX. Measuring News Consumption
A. Television
B. Radio
C. Web
Figure 1.8: Measuring news consumption
X. Objectivity, Bias and Transparency
Box: What would you do?
Box: The pillars of good journalism
XI. A Newsroom That Fits You

Discussion Questions

1. Technology will continue to allow people to refine and customize the incoming flow of information based on their personal preferences. What challenges does this present to us as both information consumers and journalists?
2. People can block out information that might be important to them. Is it a danger to the society?
3. What does it mean to be a curator of information?
   It means you gather, organize and care for good, accurate information, whether it comes from your own organization or another.
4. Why has both vetting and curating information become more important for journalists over the last 15 years?
5. Digital technology has unleashed a flood of information. Is it now harder to sort out what is true and what is false?
6. What are the shortcomings of a single written article or broadcast piece when it comes to fully informing our audience?
7. Stories have a life cycle that begins before we publish or broadcast and that continues after we do so. What challenges does this present?
8. Why is reader or viewer loyalty just as important, if not more, than our total number of readers or viewers?
   Because loyalty means that our readers and viewers find our reporting to be valuable and credible over time, which should be our goal.
9. What will a newsroom that fits you look like and act like? What would its values be?
   The answer depends on your own values, ethics and priorities. Have you identified yours?

Content Presentation/Lecture Launchers

Begin this lecture with some clips from the Web that will help students catch the breadth and vision of the constant changes in journalism and technology in the era of "News Now". Each of these is designed to start a good conversation.

This clip from YouTube is usually updated each year by *The Economist* magazine:

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http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C2jDOkzrVew

Other sources to look for fresh lecture launchers are listed below:

- http://journalisminteractive.com/2011/speaker-resources
- http://ijnet.org/blog/how-journalists-can-use-foursquare-reporting
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b5Ff2X_3P_4

Activities and Assignments

Media Diet Inventory. Have each student complete an inventory and review of his/her media diet by writing down their top five of each of the following:

- Most frequented sites that produce original content
- Most trusted sources of news (formal and informal)
- Favorite periodicals—digital and print
- Favorite producers of original video content (such as a news program or TV network)
- Most valuable social network feeds, such as Facebook friends or followers on Twitter

While reviewing their lists, have the students answer the following questions:

1. Is my media diet helping me to learn and grow as a person?
2. Is my media diet helping me become a better, more informed journalist?
3. What are the deficiencies in my media diet?

Plan and Policy for Interacting with Readers. You are the editor and publisher of a news website. In a few paragraphs, write a plan and set of policies for how you will interact with readers. Be as specific and practical as possible. Your plan should answer the following questions:

- Will you allow the audience to comment on articles and videos? If so, will you require registration? How much information will you require from audience before allowing them to comment? Will you allow anonymous comments?
- Will your organization create and maintain social media accounts? Who will "speak" for the organization on those accounts? How will you encourage meaningful, multi-directional conversation through social media?
- What are the other ways in which you will interact with your audience both digitally and in person?

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CHAPTER 2: ELEMENTS OF STORYTELLING

Learning Objectives
In this section, you will help students understand

1. The elements that add up to a good visual story
2. How to find the main point of your story
3. The importance of building a story around a memorable person
4. The types of action in a story
5. The types of conflict in a story
6. How to hook and engage viewers with surprises
7. The basic audio concepts
8. The tempo and rhythm of a story
9. The basic video concepts
10. The Different ways to present radio and TV stories
11. How to plan a reporter's on-camera appearance

Concise Chapter Summary/Outline

This chapter is designed to sharpen visual thinking skills by introducing students to the key elements and concepts that comprise a compelling visual story. The chapter starts at the beginning of the process, with different ways to focus a story. By the end of the chapter, the students will understand how the various elements work together to tell a good visual story. The audio and video sections are explored in greater depth in Chapter 6.

I. What Makes a Good Story?
   A. Think visually
   B. Not all stories are visual
   Box: What would you do?
II. Focus
   A. Focus your story
   B. Six ways to find a focus
   C. Record your focus
   D. Storyboarding
   E. Stay flexible
   Box: What would you do?
   Box: Time saver
   Box: Breaking news
III. Central Compelling Character
   A. Go for the human touch
   B. Motivation
   C. Capture emotion
   D. Keep your distance
   E. Maintain objectivity
IV. Action

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A. Compelling action
B. Action in an interview
C. Action and reaction

Box: Rule of thumb

V. Conflict
A. Types of conflict
B. Fair and balanced treatment

VI. Surprises
A. A surprising twist
B. Grace notes

Box: What would you do?

VII. Good Audio
A. Keep it real
B. Audio complements visuals
C. Silence and natural sound
D. Music

Box: Working with music

VIII. Pacing
A. Mix it up
B. Weave in natural sound
C. Split sound bites
D. Let content determine pacing
E. Vary the track length

IX. Video Sequences
A. Mini-scenes

Box: Rule of thumb

B. Types of shots
1. Wide shot
2. Medium shot
3. Tight shot
4. High camera angle
5. Low camera angle

X. Broadcast Formats
A. Taking shape
B. Voicer
C. Reader
D. VO (Voice-Over)
E. VO/SOT (Voice-Over/Sound on Tape)
F. POS (Person on the Street)
G. Wrap or package

Table 2.1: Components of broadcast stories

XI. Standout Standups
A. Why do a standup?
B. When to do a standup
C. Where to do a standup
D. How to do a standup

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E. What to include
F. Don't ride the elephant
Table 2.2: Planning a standup
Box: What would you do?

XII. Putting It All Together

Discussion Questions

1. Which elements of good storytelling apply to both visual stories and written stories? Which elements are different?
2. How could you turn an issue-oriented story on America's crushing debt into a strong visual piece?
3. Some topics, such as the first snowfall or the last day of school, have been covered so much that they have become formulaic or boring. What other topics are covered over and over? How would you cover the first snowfall, the last day of school or other such often-told topic in a fresh, visual way?
4. What's the difference between a topic and a story?
5. Which of the six ways to find a focus do you want to try? Why?
6. Why does a real person usually make a better Central Compelling Character (CCC) than an expert or official?
7. After the Haiti earthquake in 2010, some medical reporters who are also doctors cared for suffering victims. Should they have picked one role or the other? If not, why? If so, which role? Why?
8. Let's say you're shooting an interview with a coffin maker. What could you show the interviewee doing while talking to you? Why is this important?
9. You're assigned to shoot an office assistant at work. The phone rings. What action and reaction shots could you record? How will these improve your story?
10. Why do you think Reuben Frank, a former president of NBC News, instructed the network reporters to show drama and conflict in their stories?
11. Objectivity requires that you don't get involved in a conflict or take sides with either the words you write or the images you shoot. Describe a situation where you could justify getting involved or taking sides.
12. Explain the importance of including surprises in your stories.
13. Describe the different ways in which a good audio can enhance a story.
14. Is it appropriate to use music in a news story? Explain why or why not. Could different types of music affect how viewers feel about a story?
15. You're working on a sad story. What could you do to slow down the tempo of the story?
16. You're working on an upbeat story. What could you do to speed up the tempo?
17. What types of natural sound could you record for a story about students moving into a dorm? For a story about dolphins? For a story about a drought?
18. You're shooting a story about the pros and cons of medical marijuana. Describe five specific shots from different perspectives that could be edited together into a sequence.
19. What would be a strong opening shot or sequence for a package on medical marijuana?

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20. What would be a strong closing shot or sequence for this package?
21. Why do you need to stay flexible when it comes to shaping the format of your story?
22. Some of your print colleagues poke fun at standups as an example of broadcast's emphasis on personality. How would you explain the importance of standups to them?
23. Do you think there are too many standups in TV news? Not enough? Just about the right amount? Explain your choice.

Content Presentation/Lecture Launchers

What Makes a Good Story?

Now that the students have a good grounding in news in the 21st century, they're ready to examine the key components of good storytelling. This chapter examines them one by one. Not every story will contain all these elements, but try to include as many as possible.

Key Points:

- Many storytelling elements are universal across different media platforms.
- Learn to think visually.
- Not all stories are visual. Some might be better told with words, but even those might be turned into visual stories if told from a different perspective.

Focus

Focusing a story is one of the biggest challenges for students and professionals alike. This section offers a variety of ways to focus a story about helicopter parents. It also differentiates between breaking news and features.

Key Points:

- Experiment with different focusing techniques to find what works for you.
- One technique might work better for one topic, while another technique works better in a different situation.
- Focusing a breaking news story is different from focusing a feature story.

Central Compelling Character (CCC)

This section explains why a real person usually makes a better CCC than an expert or official. This is also a good time to discuss emotional involvement versus journalistic objectivity.

Key Points:

- Build your story around a memorable character.
- The CCC is probably a real person rather than an official or expert.
- Keep objectivity in mind. Maintain your emotional distance.

Action

Not all topics lend themselves to compelling action, but try to include action/reaction shots or have your interviewee doing something.

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Key Points:
- Action will hook and engage viewers.
- Shoot different types of action—compelling action, the interviewee doings something, action and reaction.
- Instead of zooming and panning, let the action happen in the frame.

Conflict

Conflict is a traditional news value, so it's a natural part of stories. Conflict can be external (with an outside force) or internal (within the mind or soul of the CCC). The Bob Dotson example in this section illustrates how to analyze the four parts of a story.

Key Points:
- The four parts of a story include 1) setting the scene, 2) foreshadowing what's ahead, 3) establishing the conflict and 4) resolving the conflict.
- Show conflicting viewpoints in your stories, but don't get involved in the conflict or take sides.

Surprises

Surprises come in many forms, from a stunning visual or an unexpected sound to a memorable CCC or a fascinating fact. Another Bob Dotson example shows how surprises can turn a good story into a great one.

Key Points:
- Keep an eye out for surprises.
- Try to include one in each story.

Good Audio

Audio is critical for good storytelling. This section introduces students to basic concepts which will be explained in detail in Chapter 6.

Key Points:
- Include the voices of at least one official and one ordinary person.
- Show the viewer what the interviewee is talking about.
- You don't need to fill every second with words. Where appropriate, include silence, natural sound and/or music.

Pacing

Pacing refers to the tempo and rhythm of a story. If the voice track and sound bites are the same length, the piece becomes boring and predictable. Examples of scripts illustrate how to control the pacing by adjusting the length of the voice track, sound bites, natural sound and other elements.

Key Points:
- A compelling video contains a variety of shots and sounds.

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- Adjust the pacing by varying the length of sentences and shots, adding natural sound and/or including music.
- Let the content determine the pacing.

Video Sequences

As with the previous section on audio, this section introduces basic video concepts which will be explained in detail in Chapter 6.

Key Points:

- Sequences form the building blocks of a story.
- A sequence can have as few as two shots, but typically it has three or four—or sometimes more.
- The five types of shots are 1) wide shot, 2) medium shot, 3) tight shot, 4) high camera angle and 5) low camera angle
- Shoot a strong opening shot or sequence and a strong closing shot or sequence.

Broadcast Formats

The producer determines what form a story will take. This section introduces students to basic formats for both radio and TV: 1) voicer, 2) reader, 3) Voice-Over (VO), 4) Voice-Over/Sound On Tape (VO/SOT), 5) Person on the Street (POS) and 6) wrap or package. Table 2.1 summarizes the components of each format.

Key Points:

- Radio and TV stories can be presented in a variety of ways.
- The producer considers the day's news flow and the material available when deciding the format of each story.
- Reporters must be flexible and ready to shape their stories as needed.

Standout Standups

This section helps young reporters plan when, where, how and why to do standups.

Key Points:

- Not every story needs a standup.
- Make sure you have a good reason to use a standup.
- Deciding when to do a standup is both a visual and an editorial decision.
- The best place to do a standup is on location.
- Dress for the situation.
- Do something that serves a purpose.

Activities and Assignments

Elements of a Good Story Exercise. Select a well-known fairy tale, movie or book. In pairs or small groups, analyze your selection and write down the elements that make it a good story. List the elements on the board. Compare them with the elements discussed in this chapter.

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Focus Scenarios

- You've been assigned a story on an overweight student at your school who is experiencing discrimination as she waits for a kidney donation. What's the central question at the heart of your story? Write that question in 140 characters (not 140 words) or less. That's the length of a tweet.
- You've been assigned a story about a student at your school who was crippled in a car accident and must now try to get around via public transportation. What five questions would your viewers want answered?
- You've been assigned a story about a new police unit in your community that will deal with noisy parties around campus. Ask five "Why?" questions that takes you deeper into the story.
- You've been assigned a story about two students in a school dorm who were arrested for operating a fake ID business from their room. The students used computers to produce realistic drivers' licenses from any state, priced for underage drinkers at 300-dollars. Identify a microcosm that illustrates a broader theme, issue or trend for this story.
- You've been assigned a story about how hospitals in your community are trying to reduce the amount of time that patients spend waiting in emergency departments and waiting rooms as well as in hospitals as a whole. List all the types of people connected to your story. Whose Point Of View (POV) best tells the story? Through whose eyes is the story most compelling?
- With a classmate, sketch a story map for a story about how interacting with pets stimulates long-term memory in Alzheimer's patients, but epidemiologists worry about the introduction of diseases from animals.
- With a classmate, storyboard a story you're working on for your class. If you don't have one, storyboard one of the above stories.

CCC Newspaper Exercise. Bring in enough pages from your local newspaper so that each student has at least one page. Give the students 10–15 minutes to read their page(s) and find at least one person who could be a CCC. Ask each student to describe why the character he/she has chosen would make a good CCC in a broadcast story.

Action Role Play. One student interviews a classmate who's showing or demonstrating something. Encourage feedback from the other students. As individuals or in pairs, students practice taking action and reaction shots with camcorders or cell phone video cameras.

Bob Dotson Exercise 1. Google "Bob Dotson videos" and pick an interesting subject. Watch the video and identify the four parts.

Bob Dotson Exercise 2. Using the same or a new Bob Dotson video, identify the surprises, as described in this section.

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Bob Dotson Exercise 3. Using a Bob Dotson video, ask students to list each element and its length, as outlined in this chapter. Describe how the pacing enhances the storytelling.

Sound: Evaluating Three Versions of One Story. Watch/show three videos of the same story like:
http://www.poynter.org/how-tos/newsgathering-storytelling/94705/see-how-music-changes-a-story/

One that uses only natural sound, one that contains upbeat music and one that has somber music. Compare how the audio in each version affects your emotions and the feeling of the story. Discuss whether it's appropriate to include music in this story.

Video Sequence Activity. You've been assigned to shoot video of a piano player. Describe five different types of shots you would take.

Table Activities

- Use Table 2.1 as a template to discuss the pros and cons of the different types of broadcast formats.
- Use Table 2.2 as a template to discuss where to place standups in different types of stories.

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CHAPTER 3: REPORTING

Learning Objectives
In this section, you will help students understand

1. What a source is
2. How to decide whom to interview
3. How to develop sources and build a beat (or focus area)
4. The importance of reporter etiquette
5. The importance of being prepared
6. The reporting strategies for common assignments
7. How to use social media to improve newsgathering
8. The importance of versatility
9. How to ensure accuracy in reporting
10. The strategies for defeating deadline pressure
11. How to stay on top of the story
12. The lifestyle of a reporter in today's media landscape

Concise Chapter Summary/Outline

This chapter is designed to help students understand that the act of reporting is much more than simply collecting sound bites and video on a press release topic or creating a visual version of a story that appeared online earlier in the day. At the conclusion of this chapter, students should emerge with strategies to develop sources, to cover common assignments and to work efficiently to meet the demands of deadline pressure.

Chapter 3 is also an opportunity for students to understand the "real world" demands of reporters today. This includes responsibility for using social media to both gather news and share content, and the ability to work alone as a multimedia journalist.

I. In Search of the Source. (Original stories are generated through sources)
   A. What is a source?
      Figure 3.1: Consider the source. (Each source brings with it advantages and disadvantages)
   B. How do you find a source on deadline?
   C. Getting (at least) both sides of the story
   D. Whom do you interview?
      Figure 3.2: The continuum of sources
      Box: Casting a wide net for sources
      Voices from the Newsroom (VFTN): Deciding whom to interview
      Box: What would you do?
II. Build Your Stable of Sources
III. Reporter Etiquette
   Table 3.1: The etiquette of reporting
   VFTN: Building your beat

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IV. What's in Your Bag?
  A. Ready for the road trip
  Box: A reporter's travel bag
  VFTN: Don't leave home without it!
V. Your Assignment
  A. Assignment: Spot news
    Box: Spot news checklist
  B. Assignment: Press conference
  C. Assignment: Meeting
  D. Assignment: Speech
    Box: Press conferences, meetings and speeches checklist
  E. Assignment: The courthouse
    Box: Courthouse checklist
VI. Social Media as a Reporting Tool
  A. Social media: Finding voices, facts and context
    1. Katrina, Virginia Tech, the Hudson River and San Bruno
    2. What it means to you
VII. More Responsibility Around the Corner
VIII. Accuracy and Attribution
  Box: Accuracy and attribution checklist
IX. Defeat Deadline Pressure
  Figure 3.3: The clock is ticking
  Figure 3.4: Backtime your day
  Box: What would you do?
X. Setting Up for Future Success
  VFTN: Backpack journalism
XI. A Reporter's Life, Small Market and Large
  A. Small market
  B. Large market

Discussion Questions

1. People of course can be a source. What else may serve as a valuable source of information when chasing a story?
2. Each source brings with it pros and cons. Why is important to consider this before scheduling an interview?
3. While working on a developing story, how should a reporter balance casting a wide net for sources with a fast-approaching deadline?
4. Explain the importance of cultivating your own sources.
5. Using your own routine as a template, how would you begin to expand your network of sources?
6. In Voices from the Newsroom, how did Bruce Johnson, a reporter in Washington D.C., find success in building sources?
7. How does Johnson keep those relationships strong?
8. Where does he draw the line?
9. How might deadline pressure affect your etiquette in the field?

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10. How you would wish a reporter would act if he/she approached you during a difficult time?
11. Why is it important to consider how a source may react to your request for an interview?
12. How does being prepared each day create opportunities as a reporter?
13. What's the only item you're going to add to your bag?
14. Is racing for a breaking story an excuse for not doing background on the assignment? Why/Why not?
15. What does the author mean by saying "do a 360-degree turn when you arrive on scene"?
16. How will getting source contact information on the scene help you with stories in the future?
17. Name one thing you can do after a breaking story that could turn into a follow-up report days or weeks later?
18. Why is studying a press conference topic before it begins so important?
19. Must you only ask questions that relate to the newsmaker's press conference agenda?
20. What else must you document besides what is being said?
21. What document can help you stay on track when assigned to cover a meeting?
22. What are some of the advantages of covering a meeting, even if most reporters might find it boring?
23. If the meeting is running long, how might you still be able to interview the people you need?
24. When covering a speech, how might you use an advance copy of the document to further your reporting?
25. What's the advantage to standing next to the camera during the coverage of a meeting, press conference or speech?
26. How might you identify someone who could serve as a central compelling character in your story?
27. How can you mine the courthouse for story ideas?
28. Give an example why it is important to know the courthouse rules in your jurisdiction.
29. What is your first opportunity in the court to learn details of someone who has been arrested?
30. What might you discover, and who would you meet during an arraignment or initial appearance?
31. In the book, you are introduced to a reporter named Tim. How has the social media become a part of his morning routine?
32. What's the advantage of posting even a little information about the story you're covering online early in the day?
33. How can Twitter help you find sources in a breaking news situation?
34. What's the upside to being able to report, shoot and edit videos, even present live reports all by yourself?
35. Doing it all as a multimedia journalist (MMJ) takes time. So how would you make sure you're still tracking the story?
36. Does a future as an MMJ discourage you from becoming a reporter?
37. What's more important—speed or accuracy?

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38. How might the viewer or reader react after learning there was incorrect information in your story?
39. How might you still be able to make your deadline even if some information you had hoped to report is still unconfirmed?
40. Why is it important to be honest with yourself when it comes to your limitations?
41. How would you solve the dilemma of deciding whether to get an important interview if it means missing your first deadline of the day?
42. Name three things you can do each day to stay organized and on top of your assignments.
43. What can go wrong if you fail to share the information you've gathered each day with others in the newsroom?
44. When you hear Anne McCloy describe life in a small market, what can you do now to make sure you're well prepared for a similar opportunity?
45. How has Gina Silva been able to stay employed in Los Angeles while hundreds of others are being let go?
46. What's the biggest difference you see between the life of a small market and large market reporter? Or is there much of a difference at all?

Content Presentation/Lecture Launchers

In Search of the Source

Knowing that students have just completed a review of key components of good storytelling, now is the time to help them learn how to find the people, documents and videos that help them to make strong stories.

In Search of the Source is an opportunity to point out that many sources, while valid, have an advantage, disadvantage or agenda that a reporter must consider. Politicians, officials, companies, nonprofits and victims or witnesses all have something to offer. Cast a wide net early, but as reporters line up interviews, both points of view and logistics must be considered.

Key Points:

- Sources don't have to be people. They can be documents, videos and more.
- Use all resources and time available to search for sources and information.
- Be aware of the pros and cons potential sources bring with them.
- While it may be difficult, journalists have a responsibility to represent both sides of a story.
- Deadlines and logistical challenges can force hard choices when deciding whom to interview.

Build Your Stable of Sources

The reporters quoted in Build Your Stable of Sources make it clear that the effort to build a strong database of sources is more than a nine-to-five job. But having strong sources will transform a young reporter into an indispensable newsroom resource. Many students

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consider finding story ideas as one of their ultimate challenges. Explain how building a strong stable of sources is the key to discovering original story ideas.

Key Points:
- Make source development part of your everyday routine.
- Look for new opportunities to meet people, on and off the job.
- Maintaining strong face-to-face relationships will help sources to be more comfortable revealing information in the future.
- Stay organized, because you may need to call on a source at any time.

Reporter Etiquette
Under tight deadline pressure, a young reporter's behavior can have a significant effect on his/her ability to gain the trust of a source. Reporters need to be confident in their request for an interview and compassionate with the source's concerns.

Key Points:
- Don't let deadline stress undermine a confident exterior.
- When asking for an interview, be prepared for however a source may respond.
- Be respectful.
- Don't accept food or gifts.

What's in Your Bag?
What's in Your Bag? is all about being prepared. The anecdote in the textbook is a good example of how preparation can create opportunity. News directors and editors will turn to multimedia journalists who are dependable.

Key Points:
- Have your daily bag packed with everything you need to track down the story, and those little things that can make surviving the day (or night) a little easier.
- Keep a travel bag in the trunk of your car or under your desk. Being ready at a moment's notice will increase your odds of getting a big story.
- Don't forget your passport!

Your Assignment
Your Assignment is an opportunity to give students a sense of what it means to be a general assignment multimedia journalist. One day you may be covering the governor's speech. The next, it's time to sit in on a suspect's arraignment. For many, it's this unpredictable side of the job that encourages them to come back to the newsroom each day.

In this important section, the authors have outlined key strategies and considerations for covering spot news, press conferences, meetings, speeches and the courthouse. Three checklists provide an important go-to guide for students. Be sure to break down the "before, during and after" of each assignment.

Key Points:

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- Even in the race to spot news, collecting background information en route is a valuable use of time.
- On scene, remember, the story may be behind you.
- Shoot those visual elements that might disappear soon.
- Submit information requests before the end of the day.
- Covering a press conference well means doing your topical homework ahead of time so you can ask good questions about the topic.
- Take notes and identify topics that you may want to question later.
- Look for other details (number of attendees, etc.) that could provide context or flavor to your story.
- Be prepared to find balance to the story if the newsmaker is pursuing a specific agenda.
- Even dull meetings can reveal good story ideas and provide access to sources and central compelling characters.
- Use the meeting agenda as a road map of what to expect.
- Like a press conference or speech, stay close to your camera so that you can note the time code of possible sound bites.
- During the meeting, stay focused on the key topic(s). The story isn't that a meeting happened, it's about the issue and the people affected.
- Getting key interviews might mean pulling sources out of the meeting for a few minutes.
- Covering the courthouse as a routine will provide access to consistent story ideas and sources.
- Reporters may be able to track the progress of a case online, but many important details may only be found in the actual case file, which is typically available through the clerk's office.
- The arraignment or initial appearance will provide first access to key details and sources in a case.

Social Media as a Reporting Tool

We all know that using social media is now a fact of life for a multimedia journalist. In this section, it's important for students to understand that social media can be used not only to spread news, but also to gather news. Reporter Tim Vetscher provides a good example of how to use social media on a daily basis in both ways. Meanwhile, Lesli-Jean Thornton's background on social media provides students with strong context as to why it is important not to ignore this growing resource.

Key Points:

- Make social media news gathering part of your daily routine.
- Reporting information via social media can also advance your newsgathering efforts if it elicits feedback from the public.
- The use of Twitter and hashtags is an excellent way for reporters to track what's going on in a community during a developing story, as seen in the 2010 San Bruno fire.

More Responsibility around the Corner

More Responsibility around the Corner is intended to reinforce a common theme in News Now: versatility is the key to survival and advancement in today's multimedia world. From

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network news reporters like Diana Alvear to small market journalists, everyone is being asked to do more. It's a good time to reinforce that it is unrealistic to enter broadcast journalism today if your goal is simply to be on television. Also, identify other roles within newsrooms that have been consolidated or eliminated.

Introducing the term MMJ, this would also be a good time to discuss other ways these versatile journalists are described, including backpack journalist (BPJ) or as we used to call it, "one man band." What was once a right of passage (starting career as a "one man band" before working with a crew) is now the status quo. Looking ahead, you could point out that we'll hear from a network MMJ, NBC's Mara Schiavocampo, in Chapter 6.

Key Points:
- The number of jobs within a newsroom is decreasing.
- Versatility increases your value.
- The role of an MMJ, once only seen in small markets, is now common in large markets and exists at the network level as well.

Accuracy and Attribution

Getting the story first means nothing if the story is incorrect. For a journalist, credibility is very important, so accuracy and attribution must still be the top priority. Reinforce in your students that a second set of eyes should always read copy before it goes on air. Making errors could cost a journalist his/her job. Walk through the Accuracy and Attribution Checklist.

Key Points:
- The race to be first with information can become an invitation to cut corners.
- Accuracy of your report is still more important than being first with information.
- Use the Accuracy and Attribution Checklist to make sure your report is on target.
- Errors in reporting often lead to the loss of a job.

Defeat Deadline Pressure

Deadline pressure often hits new reporters hard. We hear through young reporters throughout the book that dealing with deadlines is a constant source of stress. This section is designed to give new journalists a way to manage deadlines. The key is to determine how long he/she needs to complete the required tasks like writing and editing. Once an MMJ knows his/her own limitations, it will reveal how much time can realistically be spent in the field on the news-gathering process.

Key Points:
- Knowing your own limitations will reduce stress.
- "Backtime" your day to reveal how much time you have to stay in the field gathering information without missing your deadline(s).
- It's important to stay in close communication with supervisors to ensure they understand your progress or complications that may arise.

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Setting Up for Future Success
Too often reporters will file their last report and simply call it a day. The point of Setting up for Future Success is that a little organization and planning will help today's multimedia journalist discover more stories and give his/her news organization a successful launching point for the next day's coverage. Review with students best practices for using time effectively to cultivate sources. Discuss story and source organization, including saving new source information, filing document requests, and providing the assignment desk or editor with complete information that could help another reporter follow the story.

Key Points:
- Find an organizational style that works for you, and stick to it.
- Use all available time (like your commute) to further the story idea generation and sourcing process.
- Consistently share information with other members of the news team in an organized, reliable way.

A Reporter's Life, Small Market and Large Market
This is a wonderful opportunity to make sure that student reporters understand the rigors of the professional world. Too often students select journalism as a major because they want to be on TV. The two women profiled in this section make it clear that there's plenty of hard work, no matter where you live.

Key points:
- Demand for daily production is high
- Stress is a reality
- Deadlines are challenging
- Even large market reporters are being asked to do more
- Versatility improves longevity
- Co-workers may be both friends and competitors

Activities and Assignments

Source Pros and Cons. Use Figure 3.1 as a template to discuss the pros and cons of well-known sources in your own community.

Continuum of Sources. Use Figure 3.2 as a template to discuss the continuum of sources, and the importance of making smart decisions when deciding whom to interview. Pick a topic (like the dorm fire), and have students contribute in a discussion all of the possible sources, then whittle them down to necessary interviews. To give a sense of time constraints, discuss realistically how much time they would have to get all of this done.

Evaluating Circles of Influence. We all have circles of influence in our lives. For students, this may be school, perhaps a fraternity, a job and family. All of these circles become resources for sources and story ideas. Ask students to write down their own circles of influence. Once that is complete, discuss their answers and finally challenge them to

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identify one, two, perhaps even three new circles of influence from which they can expand their network of sources.

Reporter Etiquette Role Play. First, have a student pretend to be on the phone, and call you for an interview on a story. How is his/her confidence level? How could he/she improve his/her pitch? Next, find two student volunteers. One will play the role of victim's relative, the other is a reporter. Have the student reporter approach the victim's relative and ask for an interview. Discuss what went well, and strategies for improvement. This also could be done with the whole class, in pairs.

What's in Your Bag? A simple concept that is meant to ensure young reporters see the value of being prepared and discover new things they can include in their own bags to stay one step ahead. Try asking each student to pick something out of his/her own bag, backpack or purse that would be valuable as a multimedia journalist and put it on the table. Once everyone has made a contribution, see what you have. What's missing? Using the A Reporter's Bag Checklist, have each student check which items they have with them now, and/or which are readily available. They will likely identify some items worth finding right away.

Assignment Exercises

Assignment 1: Spot News. This is a perfect time for a timed exercise. Give students five minutes or so to quickly come up with a plan of action for covering a breaking news story as if they were en route to the scene. Hopefully, they've read the chapter and are familiar with the Spot News Checklist. It's not just about who you'll interview as we discussed earlier in this chapter, but also about what other elements (videos, documents, etc.) that will be necessary to tell the whole story.

If you'd like to include a guest, this would be a perfect time to bring in a local public information officer to reveal what it's like to work with journalists from "the other side."

Assignment 2: Press Conference. This is another opportunity for a simulation. Before class, find a press release or create your own about an incident, upcoming event or other potential news story. You, the instructor, can serve as the newsmaker. Students can serve as the reporters, and ask you questions in a group setting. Ideally, you haven't included all of the critical information in the release or opening statement. If your student reporters are good, they'll uncover some valuable information.

Assignment 3: Meeting. One of the most challenging aspects of covering a meeting is being able to figure out what's important, and what's not. What's relevant to the audience? Before class, obtain a detailed, even confusing agenda from a local government. Make copies, and together with the class dissect the agenda and figure out which topics you'd target at the outset of the meeting. If you prefer, this could be a homework assignment as well.

Assignment 4: Speech. We suggest obtaining a copy of a significant speech by a local or state politician. Assign students to identify possible sound bites, as well as information worthy of follow-up questions. What would those questions be?

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Assignment 5: The Courthouse. Here is another opportunity to show students how to navigate paperwork that is often confusing. Before class, obtain either a court docket, initial appearance paperwork or both. With the court docket, have students use computers to research those appearing before the court, and identify story ideas. Use the initial appearance paperwork to reveal what new information can be found. Where would this lead a reporter next?

Twitter Accounts. If they haven't done so already, have students establish Twitter accounts. Work together or give an assignment to identify not only news sources to follow, but other agencies and organizations that may release information that would aid in reporting or story idea generation. Don't forget to follow each other!

How Newsrooms are Changing Activity. If you're looking for a way to visualize how newsrooms are changing, how about obtaining or creating an organizational chart or department list of a television station 20 years ago, and compare that to a current model? Students will see that to remain viable, they'll need to be versatile.

"Old School" Assignment. Here's a chance to go old school. In advance of class, prepare a news story on a current topic that at first glance appears largely correct, but actually contains factual errors and a lack of attribution. Using the Accuracy and Attribution Checklist, assign students to use computers to identify any errors, and provide revised, accurate copy.

Review Figure 3.3. Use the template in Figure 3.3, to give students a sense of how much time they have to complete their story in a typical day. If they left the newsroom at 10 a.m., and need a couple hours to write and edit, most likely they'll need to be back in the newsroom around 2 p.m. or 3 p.m., depending on skill level. The exercise reinforces how quickly the day goes by, but more importantly shows students when they must stop news gathering in the field and return to produce their story and meet deadline. It also reinforces the importance of smart choices in deciding whom to interview, which was discussed earlier in this chapter.

Special Guest Idea: Recent Grad. Despite our efforts as instructors, no one can bring home life in the "real world" better than a recent graduate. If not in person, schedule a recent graduate now working in a newsroom to appear via Skype or on the phone to offer insight and encouragement to students.

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CHAPTER 4: SPECIALTY REPORTING

Learning Objectives
In this section, you will help students understand

1. The value of documents in reporting
2. How to begin a document search
3. The Freedom of Information Act
4. The difference between federal and state open records
5. How to create a records request
6. Their right to attend open meetings
7. What to do if you are excluded from an open meeting
8. The basic concepts of computer-assisted reporting
9. The concept of a focus area (or beat)
10. How to develop a focus area
11. The strategies for covering common focus areas
12. The concept of investigative reporting
13. The best practices for investigative reporting

Concise Chapter Summary/Outline

This chapter is intended to introduce students to concepts and strategies that can take their reporting skills beyond basic general assignment work. Students will learn the importance of documents, how to access open records and prevent exclusion from open meetings. This chapter will also help students identify and create their own focus areas (or beats). Finally, students will be exposed to the basics of investigative reporting, and how to do investigative work while still meeting daily general assignment expectations.

I. The Paper Trail
   Figure 4.1: Following the paper trail
II. Freedom of Information
   Box: Sample records request
   Box: Time saver
III. Open Meetings
   Box: What to do when you are excluded from a meeting checklist
IV. Computer-Assisted Reporting
V. Finding a Focus Area
   Box: A breakdown of one station's focus area assignments
VI. Geographical Focus Areas
   Box: Time saver
   Box: How to develop a focus area
VII. Popular Focus Areas
   Box: What would you do?
   A. Police
   B. Court

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Box: Tips for covering courts
C. Government
VFTN
D. Education
E. Business and consumer
Box: Getting started on the business beat
Box: Time saver
F. Sports
Box: The do's and don'ts for sports journalists
Box: What would you do?

VIII. Investigative Reporting
Box: How investigations begin
Box: Rule of thumb
A. Ensure accuracy
Box: What would you do?
B. Keeping investigative stories alive

Discussion Questions

1. What's the difference between someone simply making an accusation in a sound bite versus having documentation to back up the accusation?
2. What's an example of a general assignment story that could be aided by supporting documentation? Now, how would you get that information?
3. If the front-runner in an election is receiving political donations, how would you go about figuring out who is giving money to the campaign? What stories might that information lead to?
4. How do open records laws protect the public?
5. Is there an advantage to informally requesting a document?
6. How might a lack of understanding of your state's open records law affect your ability to be a good reporter?
7. Do you think all politicians or government workers understand open meetings law? If not, who's going to hold them accountable?
8. Would you have the strength to stand up and object to a closed meeting that you believe should be open to the public?
9. Where might you turn to find out what the open meeting and open records laws are in your state?
10. What are the two things you need to do for a good "Computer-Assisted Reporting" (CAR) stories?
11. How might you use CAR data to add perspective to a story, say, on rising crime rates?
12. How might becoming an adept at CAR help your career?
13. How has technology helped focus areas (or "beats") make a comeback in journalism?
14. How might you be both a general assignment reporter while at the same time maintain a focus area?
15. How might an unofficial focus area add value to your news organization? What would you choose?
16. How does covering a geographical focus area become part of your everyday life?

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17. Think of a focus area that interests you. How might you begin to develop that beat?
18. Why is it important that you and your supervisor are on the same page when it comes to focus area expectations?
19. Why isn't a public information officer the best person to cultivate as a source?
20. Becoming a successful police reporter means getting to know others beyond those in the department. Who else should you be talking to?
21. Why does Pulitzer Prize-winning Chicago court reporter Maurice Possley believe it's important to be observant while covering court cases?
22. Why must a good city or county government reporter take time to cover smaller meetings or events.
23. Does being a government reporter mean just tracking those who get a paycheck from the city or county? Who else should you be talking to?
24. How does CNN Capitol Hill correspondent Brianna Keilar gain the trust of her sources?
25. Why is the education beat a great focus area for connecting with your audience?
26. Why is business an especially challenging focus area to relate to the average viewer or reader?
27. How does consumer coverage provide an opportunity to advocate for your audience?
28. How is managing relationships while covering sports more challenging than most focus areas?
29. How can local sports journalists differentiate themselves from national outlets like ESPN?
30. How does a story tip become an investigative theory?
31. Working as a general assignment reporter, how might you still be able to build your investigative skills?
32. What are some ways investigative reporters can stay relevant in today's newsrooms?

Content Presentation/Lecture Launchers

<u>The Paper Trail</u>
Increasing deadlines and technology have created the common routine of the "day turn" story in television news. The Paper Trail is an opportunity to remind students that it is the stories that have depth and layers which provide original content for the viewer and new challenges for the journalist.

Many students enter journalism with the hope of improving the community in which they live. Understanding how to use documents and developing skills to dig deeper is a way to make that happen even in the smallest newsrooms.

Key Points:
- Official documents or correspondence can take a news story from reporting simple accusations to proof, and sometimes change.
- Finding documents today is easier than ever before.
- Document sources can reach beyond government and open records.

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Freedom of Information

One of the key skills a reporter needs in his/her toolbox is the ability to write a records request. Freedom of Information offers an opportunity to explain the difference between the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and state open records laws. There is also a sample records request which will give students the basic concept behind the document. But don't forget to point out to students that there is a downside to writing the request, which is how long it can take to get the information back. Sometimes all you need to do is ask.

Key Points:

- The Freedom of Information Act and state open records laws provide journalists (and the public) access to millions of important government records.
- Federal records require the use of the FOIA.
- Individual states also have open records laws that apply to state and local government.

Open Meetings

More than their veteran colleagues, young reporters are often reluctant to fight for access to records, even meetings. Open Meetings is an opportunity to remind students that as representatives of the public, they have a duty to challenge lawmakers or others who attempt to keep open meetings, closed.

You should also remind students that the right to access records or meetings also includes "virtual" discussions if enough lawmakers are taking part. For example, if three of five council members are discussing a controversial issue via email that would typically be considered a discussion subject to open meeting laws.

Be sure to go through the What To Do When You Are Excluded From A Meeting Checklist.

Key Points:

- The public (therefore journalists) have a certain rights under open meeting laws.
- Open meeting laws vary by state.
- Journalists should be prepared to object to a closed meeting.

Computer-Assisted Reporting (CAR)

CAR is a chance to explain to students that data-driven stories are a terrific source of original content that also typically adds context to an important topic. As Stephen K. Doig points out, using a computer to help examine data doesn't mean you have to be an expert. The simple understanding of a spreadsheets and access to the data is usually all you need to get started.

Key Points:

- Computer-assisted reporting is easier than it sounds.
- Data-driven stories add context to important issues or concerns.
- Reporters with CAR ability often stand out among their colleagues.

Finding a Focus Area

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First, you may be wondering why we've chosen the term "focus area" over "beat." As exemplified by the box description of the KNXV assignments, today multimedia journalists are often being asked to track several topics, rather than become deeply involved in one beat. Also, as an old newspaper term, many consider "beat" outdated in today's newsrooms.

Finding a focus area is an opportunity to encourage students to think about what areas of interest are personally appealing. For example, some may be more interested in police, others in environment, etc. Also, it is important to understand that a focus area does not necessarily have to be an official responsibility, but rather an area of interest that adds value to the news product.

Key Points:

- Focus areas are also known as "beats."
- Any newsroom journalist can take on a focus area. It is not exclusively for reporters.
- Focus area assignments are most successful if the journalist has a genuine interest in the subject area.
- Technology has created more opportunities for MMJ's to take on focus areas.
- Focus areas do not have to be official, but rather an area of interest where a journalist can add value to the news product.

Geographical Focus Areas

It is not uncommon for an entry-level reporter to be assigned to a news bureau, thus necessitating the adoption of a geographical focus area. Students should be made aware of the need to become an active part of the community in which they live. When covering a geographical area, who you meet at the grocery story or where you work out is an opportunity to expand your network of sources and stay plugged in to what people are concerned about in the community.

Take a few minutes to walk through the box "How to Develop a Focus Area". Unfortunately, today too often new reporters are thrown into this situation without significant guidance from management. This primer can serve as a valuable place to start.

Key Points:

- A geographical focus area means covering many topic areas, but all within one community.
- A successful bureau reporter will become part of the fabric of the community, spending off hours in the area and connecting with the people he/she covers.
- Developing a focus area from scratch means reaching out, staying organized and creating routines.

Popular Focus Areas

In Popular Focus Areas, we examine the most prevalent topics being covered today. Some, like police and courts, have long been a staple of beat reporting. Others, like business, are a growing area of interest.

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Within this section, four of the focus areas (courts, government, business and sports) include breakout boxes or Voices from the Newsroom in which journalists working today offer valuable tips. Like others, the "What Would You Do?" scenario in this section is a way to point out some of the challenges journalists face on a daily basis. Many students hope to cover sports. Be sure to take a moment and discuss the challenges sports journalists face when a controversial story emerges in what is often a very nonconfrontational focus area.

Key Points:

- Public information officers have their own job to do and shouldn't be considered a key source when covering a beat.
- Covering a focus area also entails getting to know those that work with (rather than for) the agency itself.
- Take time to study and be knowledgeable about your topic.
- Discovering and reaching out to those who are affected by the newsmakers you cover is an important part of covering a focus area.
- While you may come to understand the language (jargon) of your focus area, remember your audience likely does not relate to the language of the insiders.
- More than most, sports reporters face the unique challenge of cultivating relationships with teams while needing to remain objective.

Investigative Reporting

Many students enter journalism with the objective of becoming an investigative reporter. We know that's tough to accomplish, especially in today's newsrooms. Managers are looking to do more with less. However, in Investigative Reporting, students can learn not only what it takes to be an investigative reporter today, but also traits they can take on in a general assignment world to build investigative skills.

It's important to point out to students that good investigations take time, and reporters must have multiple ideas working at one time. Often stories fall through. As noted in the "How Investigations Begin" box, while a tip or general assignment story may spark an idea for an investigation, the journalist must develop a theory that becomes the basis of the investigation.

Take a moment to walk through the pros and cons of hidden cameras. There are both legal and ethical considerations. Most journalists agree that hidden cameras should only be considered when there is no other visual way to convey what is going on. Finally, encourage students to cultivate their own investigative stories while still meeting their general assignment responsibilities. A few minutes each day can be enough to request some documents, ask a few questions or fit in an interview.

Key Points:

- Investigations begin with a simple idea or tip, but the journalist must then develop a theory to serve as the basis of the probe.
- Investigative reporters sift through hundreds of leads, most of which fall through.

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