Shared Research – The NewsHouse

## Charlotte Collected Information:

### Johnathon and Jesus, co-sports producers

*Suggestion:* Add post carousel, finds website very static

*Process*

* Game and event coverage
* Not going to games, more assigning
* Getting credentials
* Editing their work
* Pretty busy, some sports take priority
* Try and send people to every game → harder with smaller stories, everyone wants to cover football

*Upload process*

* Fronts (homepage, section leads): once actual article is updated/posted, producer has to make sure article gets published elsewhere on website → doesn’t automatically update section homepage (for example: new sports game cover is uploaded, Jonathan has to go in and update the sports section once again)

*Features used most*

* Dashboard → gives overview
* Media library
* Story calendar

*Feature dislike*

* Double upload

*Recurring issues*

* How can you make things more accessible?
* How can you explore blocks better?

*Websites used*

* Google drive
* Slack
* Syracuse.com
* NY Times

**Annie (life and style; trends, events, student population)**

*Process*

* Check-in with writers on draft process (DAILY)
  + Don’t go over three drafts
  + Push along to other content editors (Julia for example)
* Reach out to photo team
* Longer stories, not usually daily, breaking-news
  + Have time to prepare for stories

*Upload process*

* Put everything into CMS
  + Computer System Online, WordPress → template, fill in the draft
    - \*\*PAIN IN THE ASS
    - Very frustrating to use
    - Does not like to make edits
      * For example: Story calendar → should be able to click on a story and make edits. However, it will make a second story or not load at all

*Features used most*

* Dashboard → gives overview
* Media library
* Story calendar

*Feature dislike*

* Fronts

*Recurring issues*

* Special projects section → features not present anywhere else
  + No special projects section at the sticky header

*Websites*

* Slack
* Outlook
* The New Yorker
* Major outlets, Post, Times
  + Depends on the story

## Alex RG Collected Information:

### Nicole, Photo & Visual Editor

*Issues*

* Photo Content
  + Gallery option never works, side by side photo don’t center
  + Captions need to be same size as picture for proportions to match
  + The little feature images have to be 2x3 or else it won’t fit to box
    - Need to create a container
  + Slider gallery dimensions same as large format image when not in story body
* General
  + Credits and external links for author profiles at bottom of page need to be designed better, not clear hierarchy
    - Some of the stories fully don’t have credits
  + The more button on right moves to campus news
  + Clear out unnecessary pages and info
  + Special projects is not interactive
  + Under “cuse rules”: su standard is a section
  + Design extra space into “photo by” (in wordpress) cause she always has to add extra space before the name
  + The sections are confusing
  + **When you upload a story, it has to be uploaded to each individual page**

*Suggestions*

* Would like to see some type of visual on the right side bar
* The right tabs of stories, give them some section header for context
* Images have alternate text with the caption, tag the story with the picture, have the title and description (creator)
* Images get turned into the drop form, google drive, pulls them off google drive, edits, resize, upload to media library in own folder,
  + Go into story itself after
  + From ideation to publication of pictures
* Have a visual with story as much as possible, that’s what draws her in
* Having pull quotes stand out, designed (different color, size, weight, etc)

*Roles*

* 12 stories a week just on Nicole, 2 to 3 stories a week per section
* She both edits the pictures and finds people to take pictures (assigns)

*Tech Use*

* Interact with pinterest a lot
* Houstonlanding.org

## 

## Questions for Caroline Stevenson- Interviewed by Nicole Beaudet

**What is your major?**

* MND

**What year are you?**

* Senior

**What is your role at the Newshouse?**

* Social media lead producer

**When and how did you get involved with the Newshouse?**

* People who graduated who were lead producers brought her on as a contributing writer sophomore year
* Knew professor glass and he reached out over the summer, asked if you were interested in social media

**Day to day responsibilities**

* Two fold
* One hand… in charge of posting on all social media platform
  + Twitter, instagram, facebook twitter
* Other hand… MND 505
  + Capstone manages every 3 or 4 days a new student is involved in the social media

**When do you have meetings for the newshouse?**

What occurs at those meetings?

* MND 506- all the lead producers monday and wednesdays
  + Since it is a class time we all have to be there
  + Go over the content calendar, CMS system tells when we are planning to publish a story, make changed to calendar
  + Talk through stories that need to be published

How do you communicate with other members?

* Use slack to communicate all the time

What is the general workflow of your day to day responsibilities?

**Do you find the website easy to use?**

What issues have you encountered using the website?

* Never really had to use a website even as a writer
* Just send off stories to lead producers and they would put it in the CMS story
* Sometimes go into it but VERY infrequently

**What do you like about the website?**

* Likes that it is very simple and easy to navigate
* Likes the consistent color palette
* Thinks that it is outdated, but does well because it is classic
* Has looked the exact same and many other news sites have been updated

**Do you like the website logo?**

* Likes it and thinks that it makes sense but could be revised and room for improvement

**What do you think is currently the best feature on the website?**

* Music and concerts but that it sorta already under entertainment
* They cover this a lot of comedy and show and this could be highlighted more
* Second most popular to sports

**How do you coordinate working with photographers?**

* Not much in your role
* Runs photos by associate executive producer
* Pulls photos from google drive where photographers upload photos

**In your opinion, what differentiates the Newshouse from the Daily Orange?**

* The newshouse covers a lot but DO covers literally every single thing
* Newshouse much more on campus newshouse, smaller scale more niche
* DO puts out 3x amount of stories and stories get lost
* Newshouse feels more like a community and it is close knit
* ALL online, pride selves on digital content, more of an online magazine as opposed to newspapers

**Describe the Newshouse in 3 words**

* Connected to SU and syracuse area
* Classic or timeless
* Welcoming, encouraging,
  + To new writers or photographers

## Alex Levy Collected Information:

### Student journalist: Anna

1. Are there any projects or types of stories that you would like to be able to do (or would like to do more of), but, because of the limitations of the Newshouse website, are currently difficult, time-consuming, or not feasible to do?
   1. Podcasts with transccripts, timeline bar, tabs, descripiton, etc.
      1. There is a whole class (MND 305) that create podcasts (Takahashi’s class only)

#### Notes

* Podcasts are currently made videos with a picture
  + Might be helpful to have podcasts be integrated into the webstie as more visually appealing
* Integrate PDFs into website
* News
  + Encompases on and off campus sections
  + A lot of whitespace on photojournalism pieces. Maybe they can be more blown up
  + Email link
  + No tag distinction between hard news and editorial
  + Not a lot of breaking news
  + Oppertunity for students to get their name on a story
  + A lot of MMD students need published sotries to get internships
  + Definitely could integrate subheadings
  + Less passive voice - more SEO friendly
  + Home page is very condensed in the center
  + **Newshouse only has central stream of images, but NYT has lots of content on the page**
  + Content can overlap
  + Blurry line between news and life and style
  + Life and style is also called arts and culture
  + Each nav section is associated with a lead producer
  + Is there a way to see how many tags there are?
  + Most people are freelancers

## Student journalist: Julia (executive producer)

#### Process:

* Ideal is to have assets taken and articles written before uploding
  + A lot of times they are waiting for photos
* Can’t upload photos from harddrive, needs to be from media library in wordpress
* Add story into the story calendar first
  + Usually schedule stories a week in advance, unless it is a big planned event
* Slug and category first when added in story calendar, and then when the story is actully being uploaded they fill in other information
* Uploading story
  + Switch to block editor
  + Go to outlines and then patterns, and then NH design elements
  + Different patterns, such as normal size photo, or a jumbo photo
  + Photos need to be 3:2 (3000 px by 2000px)
  + Photos need to be cropped to fit that
  + If vertical images, multiple are lined up
  + Try to avoid taking vertical photos
  + Sometimes cropping photos can be a pain, and some photos can’t be used
  + Sometimes add photos within the story
  + Sometimes add subheadings in the story
  + The wordpress backend is slow
  + Bylines are added to the bottom of their contributions when there are multiple authors
    - Doesn’t like that b/c makes it seem less important
  + Before publishing, need to complete checklist
    - Checklist is really useful because it prevents you from forgetting anything in the article
  + Copy and paste from the document the author sent
  + Wordpress is clunky to use
  + A lot of little bugs with wordpress
  + DIdn’t know how to fix bug that was happening, so she said she would have to ask professor glass
    - Once a week
    - Sometimes affects posting schedule
  + Most people are contributors, but Julia is a producer so she should have permision. If she wanted to add a user, she would need to message professor glass or gitner, which can delay posting
  + Sometimes they will have a really good headline, but it will be too long so they have to shorten it
  + Mobile headlines should always be different
    - Two different fields (one for mobile, one for desktop)
    - Sometimes constricted with mobile headlines b/c they are so short
    - She doesn’t think the mobile headline should take up the whole screen and be so big
    - The headline is so big that you don’t see the photo and byline
  + Need to go through and add hyperlins
  + Need to hide slug
  + Ensure right categories are selected and add tags
    - Have 5 tags minimum
    - Don’t usually use tags like “Syracuse University”
    - Tags should be SEO friendly
  + Usually the exerpt is the dek
* SEO checks
  + It tells them how SEO friendly the content is
  + Things enterred in the SEO checker is separeate from what the user sees (only for backend)
* Hit publish and a secondary menu appears
* Can preview what the page will look like, which is especially helpful for images
* Isn’t sure that she likes the hyperlinks being black and not being underlined
* Rarely use sidebyside images
* Would like there to be other social media integration blocks
* The settings of wordpress can be overwhelming
* Other websites make it easier to embed
* There is a way to embed embeds other than ticktok or youtube, but it is complicated and she has to go to professor glass
  + For a lot of life and style links, like to use social links
  + Or instagram posts for fashon of clothing being worn
  + Don’t use them a ton because it is complciated to work with

1. After you have written a story for the Newshouse website, what work goes into producing a story for the newshouse website?
2. Are there any projects or types of stories that you would like to be able to do (or would like to do more of), but, because of the limitations of the Newshouse website, are currently difficult, time-consuming, or not feasible to do?
   1. A separate tab or page for multi-media content, or even a separate page for podcasts
   2. Wished they dabbled in comentary or op-eds
      1. Think a lot of students would be more intreagued about writing an op-ed
      2. Don’t have an op-ed section, so they are just tagged as comentaries
3. What do you want the people reading your stories to learn, understand, and/or feel?
   1. Want users to feel like the newshouse is a platform that cares about students and covers issues students care about
   2. Makes it feel like the things students are doing is important
   3. Assumes students don’t read the decks
4. What features do you wish the Newshouse website had?
5. How does the type of story or content you are writing about affect how you layout your story
   1. Photo essays are where a lot of bigger images would be used
      1. More visual heavy
   2. The longer the content, the more headings
      1. Easier to read and more SEO friendly
   3. Listicles have headings
   4. Feels like multimedia could be used more
6. What kinds of content do you feel should be emphasized on the newshouse?
   1. Currently really sports heavy, so people may think they are a sports publication
      1. A lot of people want to write sports
   2. The off campus section feels like it is less important
      1. Feels like the off campus page front could be different
         1. Different organization of the section
            1. Maybe style and entertainment section in the off campus section
7. How do you feel about the information archetecture:
   1. Thinks the categories make sense
   2. Some people don’t realize there is other stuff on the webste
8. Do you feel that content on pages besides the main home page gets ignored?
   1. Probably
   2. Depending on the size of the recent story headlines, there might niot be many displayed
   3. Doesn’t like the empty space
      1. Doesn’t see a lot of news sites with these wide of margins
9. How much of the design do you control? Would you like predefined templates that you could pick and choose from?
10. Can you give me 5 names and contact info of people I should talk to about the newhouse?
11. What do you feel is most important to highlight on a story card?
    1. Whatever has been published latest, but balanced with the importance/significance of a piece
    2. Lead editors don’t often update fronts
    3. New articles need to be published, but editors are still hung up on little edits
    4. Need to manually update fronts
    5. Maybe the main byline could be a little bigger, but not bigger than the date or the exerpt
12. Anything else
    1. Don’t like the recent stories column
       1. Definitely need recent stories section, but doesn’t like that it is just headlines
    2. Could be more user friendly and designed more clearly
    3. Most used categories are the ones in the nav, but movies and music, and fachion are used a lot
    4. Savanah Bannanas baseball team article is a good one for us to reference as we are redesigning
       1. Having some of the media so big might be a problem

## Key insights (PROFESSOR GLASS):

* Most people only view one article
* Most traffic is referral or social media, so viewers find that the newshouse has written an article about a specific topic, so they read it, and then leave
  + Prof. Glass would like if they went to a section page or read more articles
* They have had a “similar articles” section for special projects, but never something sitewide
* Question for Prof. Gitner: What would a “similar articles” section entail? Would articles need to be tagged a certain way?

## 

## User: Jack (Junior BDJ major)

#### Observe:

* Skim past the intro
* Going through it fast
* Look through the subjeading
* Since the event has passed, less inclined to read the article
* Clicked on first main article
* Saw same kind of articles in life and style that were on the homepage
* Didn’t read many articles because they had already past
* Left website when he saw no more new content
* Interested in special projects
* Didn’t see the other articles in special projects

#### Interview:

1. How often do you read from student news outlets? Why or why not?
   1. As a bdj student, has to look for news sotries for class
   2. A few days a week
   3. Looking for something to report on
   4. Relies on social media for news
   5. Get most of cultural/student life updates from social media
2. Was it easy to find an article you were interested in?
   1. Difficult to find article interested in
   2. Looking for headline, big takeways first, then read if interested
   3. Skims top to bottom
   4. Looking for big bullet points
   5. Will read more indepth if the topic is more interesting and unique or new to him
3. What might make you more inclined to read more on the NewsHouse?
   1. If they had more output (daily articles)
4. What parts of your experience using the NewsHouse website did you not like?
   1. The UI was a little steril and not engaging
   2. DIdn’t like the black and grays
   3. Not distinct from other nres sites
   4. Saw same format in life and style as the homepage
   5. Not a lot of variaty across tabs
5. How would you describe the visual asthetics of the site? Did it affect your experience?
   1. The articles themselves are fine.
   2. Subheadings grab attention
6. Any other comments?
   1. If it was more timely, he would want to read it more
   2. First thing he looks at (outside of title), he looks at date published. If it is more than a few days old, he is less likely to read.
   3. Junior

### Random Notes:

* + Every image needs to be 2:3, and if not it needs to be cropped to that size
  + Need to upload a story to each section of the website