

The **Data-Driven** Story

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Assign the story

The **basics**

- Time peg?
- Build the team: Story editor + reporter + lead producer
- If bigger scope, + more researchers or reporters?
- Will the data need to be fact-checked? Copy edited?
- If there's video/audio or rich media content, video producer?

Tips for **small** newsrooms

- Everyone's a data reporter.
- Ask these questions early: What's the story? Source, age, reliability, time scope? Do we need to talk to an expert?
- No data hand-offs.
- Google Drive and Spreadsheets are our friends.
- Empowering the newsroom with Skillz trainings.

Organize the reporting

Make a **game plan**

- Who's **collecting** what data?
- Who's **calling** for comment?
- Who's **drafting** the text? Who's writing what?
- Who will keep the **ball rolling**? Assign a lead producer.
- Don't fall into the traps of an evergreen timeline. Set **benchmark goals**.

Visualize the data

Interrogate the project

- **What's the story** we're trying to tell here?
- Do we care about **shareability**?
- Is this story best told through a **static or interactive** presentation?
- Is this a project we'll want to open-source?
- **Open-sourcing** opens doors for others to help make your process/product better.

Build the prototype

- Design concepts and wireframing only take you so far.
- Code or build the prototype as soon as possible.
- If it works, polish, tweak, and user test until ready to publish.
- If not, back to the drawing board.

No sleep till **fact-checked**

- **Source** all your data.
- Don't let fact-checking be an afterthought.
- Expect fact-check errors and **build in time** to address them.
- Don't have a fact-checker? Try a colleague.

Stay in touch

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