GLORIA SHIELDS WORKSHOP 2017: ONLINE JOURNALISM

SOCIAL STORYTELLING

ONLINE STORYTELLING ISN'T JUST ABOUT PUTTING CONTENT ON A WEBSITE. IT'S ABOUT DELIVERING STORIES ON DIFFERENT PLATFORMS (AND SOMETIMES JUST ONE PLATFORM).

HOW MANY DIFFERENT WAYS CAN YOU TELL A STORY ONLINE?

▸ A story published on a website.

▸ A photo or an infographic.

▸ A photo gallery on some kind of social media platform (for example, Instagram).

▸ A video.

▸ A social video (made popular on Facebook, with subtitles or text that help someone understand the story without sound.)

▸ A combination of video and stills and overlaid text. (Think Snapchat.)

USING COMBINATIONS OF THOSE STORYTELLING TECHNIQUES AND PLATFORMS CAN HELP YOUR STORY REACH MORE PEOPLE.

A STORY TOLD ON SOCIAL PLATFORMS CAN DRIVE PEOPLE TO YOUR WEBSITE, AND YOUR WEB VERSION CAN USE SOME OF THE ELEMENTS IN YOUR SOCIAL STORY.

A FEW EXAMPLES

▸ A student decided to create a weekly news quiz using just emojis. He created the graphics at a specific size, and they were publicized via Twitter and Facebook at the same time every week. Read about it: https://medium.com/media-center-lab/can-emojis-tell-a-story-ツ-70fa14e1e9e4

▸ A student wanted to produce a social video piece for World Hijab Day, so she set up a station at a busy area of campus that had a box of headscarves and invited people to try them on, and demonstrated how to tie headscarves. She asked people what they knew about the hijab, and created a social video combining all these elements, along with facts about hijabs.

A FEW EXAMPLES

▸ When Beyonce announced she was having twins, a student went and made a fun social video for Facebook where he took a bin of random words and asked students to pick two words out of the bin to help name Beyonce's twins.

A FEW EXAMPLES

▸ Students covering communities in South Los Angeles set up a pop-up newsroom on busy street intersections and invited community members to participate. Several social media series came from this: a #DearLAPD photo series on Instagram where residents held up whiteboards with thoughts on police relations; an audio series where residents talked about the 2016 election; a series of blog posts called "Dear President Trump" that featured high school students creating audio clips about themselves accompanied by a written piece addressing their hopes and fears; and virtual town halls with candidates in local elections.

A FEW EXAMPLES

▸ #DearLAPD series: https://medium.com/intersections-south-la/dearlapd-south-la-residents-share-their-thoughts-on-community-police-relations-f94e4f9925ec

▸ Dear President Trump series: https://medium.com/intersections-south-la/tagged/views-and-voices

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‣ Intersections South L.A.: https://medium.com/intersections-south-la

‣ Annenberg Media Lab, where we let students write about their reporting experiments: https://medium.com/@AnnenbergMediaLab

HELPFUL TIPS: TWITTER

▸ Use Twitter lists to help you quickly find tweets from sources, or filter by topics. You can also embed tweets from these lists to accompany web stories.

▸ If you're writing a series of tweets, always reply to your own tweets to create a threaded series of tweets. That way, if someone catches you mid-stream, that person can see the original thread by clicking on the tweet and catch up.

▸ Don't make up hashtags. If there's an official hashtag, use it, but save your character count otherwise.

▸ Use photos when possible. It helps the visibility of your tweet.

HELPFUL TIPS: INSTAGRAM

▸ Hashtag all you want in your caption. You don't have a character count, so go for it. Keep your hashtags relevant, though.

▸ Make your photos compelling. If you're using text, make it visually appealing and uncluttered. The image is still king here.

▸ Craft your captions well. If you need to direct people to read more somewhere else, don't forget to do so. Mention people who are in the photo too and @ mention them if they have Instagram accounts. They can help spread your story.

HELPFUL TIPS: SOCIAL VIDEO

▸ Always be aware that people don't always have the sound turned up. Think about whether straight subtitles or your own captions will work.

▸ Social video is great for explaining things, or visual analysis of something.

▸ Have fun with it! Introduce graphic effects, text, and other things you wouldn't necessarily use in a traditional broadcast video.

▸ Keep things short and sweet. Unless your subject is compelling, people probably won't watch more than a couple of minutes.

HELPFUL TOOLS

▸ **Storify:** A platform that can be used to aggregate and collect social media content (usually tweets) and arrange these elements into a single story. Great for large events where you know a lot of people will be posting about something, and you want to crowdsource some of your coverage. These Storify stories can also be embedded into a web page or most content platforms like WordPress, to add to your existing story.

HELPFUL TOOLS

▸ **Adobe Spark Video:** Allows you to create a quick video using templates, which is helpful if you don't have a lot of design experience or time to think about your design. Upload photos from your mobile device into templates, choose to write text, or even use a combination of video and photos to create a story. You can then post these stories directly to many social media platforms.

HELPFUL TOOLS

▸ **Adobe Spark Post:** Allows you to create images with text quickly. You can choose from templates as well. These are good for creating visual teasers for stories or events. Images can be exported to various social media channels.

▸ **GIPHY cam:** Need a quick gif? This is a good app to use to create one. Shoot a gif from the app itself, or use existing photos or video to create a gif. You can add overlays and filters and text to your gif, and export it to your mobile device, or to social media channels.

HELPFUL TOOLS

▸ **Diptic:** An app for creating collages from multiple photos. The resulting photo collage can be used in various social media platforms. (You could also use Instagram's Layout app too if you know you're going to post the result to Instagram.)

▸ **iMovie:** If you need a quick place to create social videos or a simple audio slideshow, do it here. Comes with every Mac and just about all iDevices. Helpful if you don't have experience with Adobe Premiere or Final Cut Pro.

HELPFUL TOOLS

▸ **Periscope:** For live broadcasts. If you're not using Facebook Live and want to push live video to Twitter, this is the tool to use. You can also discover live broadcasts from around the world.

▸ **Anchor:** If you'd like to quickly start up a podcast, or even just deliver quick hits of the news in the style of a radio program, this is a simple service to use. Sign up and just talk into your phone! The resulting files can be shared (and listened to directly) on Twitter.

HELPFUL TOOLS

▸ **SoundCloud:** If you are doing a lot of audio storytelling, uploading your pieces to SoundCloud can be a good alternative to natively embedding them on a website. SoundCloud embeds work on just about all major content management platforms, and can be easily shared on social networks. Plus, SoundCloud embeds work with other storytelling tools, such as Knight Lab's SoundCite.

HELPFUL TOOLS

▸ **Audiogram:** You can create audio graphic to use on social media. Add a title, a photo, and an audio clip. A neat tool to preview an audio story on social media. Find here: https://audiogram.sparemin.com/audiogram/

▸ **Banjo:** A tool you can use to monitor social media posts (as long as they are public) in a certain area. Helpful for big events, or if you want to get social media sentiment from a trending event.

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