Avery Peiffer

Professor Reardon

ENGCMP 0400 10:00 AM

28 September 2020

Assignment #12

Huffington Post Article Reflection

I think that this article provides a useful outline of the importance of writing in the digital age. I liked the theme that the author stressed at the beginning; that the speed at which information is communicated over the internet means that good writing can have an outsized effect on an organization’s operations. I am familiar with many of the topics that the article mentions through classes and work, so I thought it would be useful to reflect on my experiences with them.

The article touches on the idea of content creation as a way of building an online presence. This can be accomplished by writing blog posts or guest articles showcasing one’s knowledge and experience. In the software development community, it is very common for developers to write blog posts on Medium, giving tutorials on the advanced concepts with which they are acquainted. At my co-op this summer, I had to do a lot of research and reading to familiarize myself with the concepts that I needed for my work. I usually landed on these Medium blog posts, as they were the most up-to-date sources that I could find. I would very often find these blog posts to be extremely superfluous, to the point of being a chore to read. It is possible that this is a result of the writers trying to extend their posts so more ads could fit on the page, but I think it is more likely due to inefficient writing. It felt like the authors would often forget why they were writing the tutorials, instead veering off on tangents about their specific work.

After a summer of being subjected to these blog posts, I have very ambivalent feelings about their value. I think that the quality of writing in these posts reflects on the author, for better or for worse. If I were a hiring manager, and a candidate wrote a blog like the ones I read, I would be hesitant to consider them for a position. This is even excluding the large amount of blog posts I read that were just sneaky advertisements for the author’s company. The author would discuss a problem that many developers run into, consider a handful of possible solutions ultimately deemed not desirable (by their standards), and then suggest their company’s software as a last-resort solution. I could not stand these specific posts, as I felt like my time was being wasted. Overall, I think that blog posts are a great way to reach out to a greater audience and share knowledge, but an individual that starts one must be very confident in their writing abilities, or it will reflect negatively on their professionalism.

I really liked the article’s use of a math analogy when discussing efficient communication. It reminds me of the Pareto principle, also known as the 80/20 rule (Kruse). Applied to writing efficiently, it makes the most sense as such: 20% of the writing should contain 80% of the content. I am interested to see if this is a useful principle to apply to writing. I imagine that it would make email and messaging communications more effective, because my readers will be more easily able to synthesize the main ideas of my writing. This strategy could even be applied to longform pieces of writing, albeit with more discretion. In a research paper, I would not want to cram 80% of my content into a single page. However, it is almost certainly useful to vary the information density throughout a paper, as readers can get a more accurate sense of what topics are the most important for its overall message.

Works Cited

Kruse, Kevin. “The 80/20 Rule And How It Can Change Your Life.” *Forbes*, Forbes Magazine, 8 Mar. 2016, [www.forbes.com/sites/kevinkruse/2016/03/07/80-20-rule/](http://www.forbes.com/sites/kevinkruse/2016/03/07/80-20-rule/).

Laurinavicius, Tomas. “Reasons Why Writing Remains a Critical Skill for Success.” *HuffPost*, HuffPost, 7 Dec. 2017, [www.huffpost.com/entry/reasons-why-writing-remai\_b\_12701380](http://www.huffpost.com/entry/reasons-why-writing-remai_b_12701380).