

# Online First

FALL 2014

# Where high school news sites go wrong...

- They're where the bad stories are published.
- They might go weeks without new content.
- They're viewed as an extension of the print edition.
- Stories are added after they're no longer relevant.
- They're a storage place for print PDFs.
- They don't work on getting readers to their stories.

# What if...

...you allowed your website to transform how your staff covers your school?

...you adopted an “online first” philosophy?

# Self Evaluation

Are you a print-only publication?

Are you a print publication with a website?

An online-first publication?

An online-only publication?

# New perspective on audience

Pay attention to who they are:

students, teachers, parents, community, the world

Pay attention to how you reach them:

social media, sharing, search, browsing

Pay attention to when, where, why, how long they read

# **“Online first” gives you new opportunities.**

**Breaking news and emergencies**

**Developing stories / Continuing Coverage**

**Sports game coverage**

**Movie and music reviews**

**Opinions**

# What do you need to do to be online first?

- Commit.
- Build the audience.
- Publish deliberately.
- Have a writing/editing/classroom structure conducive to online publishing.

# **Committing: Think about your language.**

**Your publication is no longer a newspaper.**

**It's a news program.**

**It's news beyond the paper.**

**It's time to change your language.**

- **Issues/Editions and Archives**
- **Section Names**



# Committing: Have a vision

- Publish stories when they're ready and relevant.
- Be the number one news source in your school.
- Publish daily.
- Have a sense of urgency and importance.
- Brainstorm and assign new stories daily.
- Study your analytics daily

# Build Your Audience

- Create awareness of your site.
- Create fun content. Create high-interest content. Create viral content.
- Get social media followers.
  - Have campaigns. Set goals.
- Study your analytics.

# Engage your audience.

- Post deliberately to social media. Avoid the auto-post plugin.
- Time your posts.
- Get readers to distribute content they like or want to promote.
- Listen to your readers with social media.
- Find sources and story ideas on social media.

# Pay attention to the reader experience

## Design your stories

- Contextual linking
- Embeddable elements (pullquotes, videos, related stories, polls)
- Multiple photos and video

# Rethink your homepage

- Does your site have a carousel? Is it effective?
- Is there a clear hierarchy of content?
- Redesign the homepage for special events.

# Understand and use the strengths of the web

- Publishing is instantaneous. You can reach your audience instantly.
- Stories can be published one at a time when they are ready,  
not when the print cycle dictates.
- Content can be the length that is appropriate --  
not cut or expanded to fit space.

# web strengths (continued)

- Storage is not an issue -- lots of photos or multimedia.
- Stories can be updated or corrected easily as new information is gathered.
- A story can be a springboard for exploration with links to additional content and related stories.

# Questions?

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