

Knightly News Style Guide and Policy Manual
Nicholson School of Communication
University of Central Florida

Welcome to UCF's Knightly News. You are part of what is becoming one of the fastest growing programs in the country. The success of this program is due in large part to the commitment to excellence of the students who come through it. It is your responsibility to maintain that commitment, even as you learn and grow as a journalist.

The purpose of this booklet is to explain the policies and procedures for Knightly News and the rest of the electronic journalism program. It has been developed in part through personal experiences of your instructors and predecessors, as well as from professional news organizations that have granted us permission to pull valuable information from their policies. It is a work in progress, and it is our expectation that you will read and become familiar with the contents of this book. In the end, however, no manual can cover every situation. You must use common sense and whenever you have questions, consult your professors.

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Who we are.... What we're about

Knightly News is a community news organization designed to provide news and information to the University community. Our mission statement –

The mission of Knightly News is to provide news and information of interest to the university community, both present and future, and to uphold the highest standards of journalism excellence.

- outlines our goals. But what are the definitions we are using for that statement? It's worth it to dive into that mission further.

1. **Mission** – this is our goal, our reason for being. We have a job to do, and make no mistake: it is a job. If you are an electronic journalism major, you have accepted a charge and a responsibility to inform the public. People depend on us to convey information to them, and to do it accurately, fairly, and without agenda.
2. **News and Information** – what is news? That can sometimes be a hard question to answer. On one day, news of new golf carts for parking services might not be newsworthy, and yet on another day it might be the lead story. News is often facts about events that affect people's lives. But it's more than just facts. It's also context and meaning. What does a new golf cart have to do with the budget? What will it mean for parking? What was given up to get a new golf cart?
3. **University community** – who is the community? We have defined the University community as those people who attend, work at, and live around the University of Central Florida. Residents of Carrillon across the street from UCF will have a lot of interest in what happens on campus, as will new grad students, tenured professors and custodians. In addition, because UCF's alumni tend to stay here in the Central Florida area, it is important to keep them in mind when covering stories. And because this is a growing University, we should keep in mind that new people move here every day/month/year, and that they want to be a part of what is happening at UCF. Therefore, keep in mind your **present** and **future** community members.
4. **Standards of journalism excellence** – There are some who would say that is an oxymoron. But while we can take a joke, we take things seriously as well. Being a journalist is not just "being on TV." People depend on us to get things right. They believe what we say, and they expect us to be careful. Think about what you expect from your professors; your mechanic; your dentist. You wouldn't want someone to do slipshod work while filling your cavities; the viewers don't want slipshod reporting. As an electronic journalism outlet, we adhere to the RTNDA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. We derive many of our own standards, which will be outlined in the pages that follow.

Ethics/Values

Accuracy

If Knightly News is going to be effective, we must be accurate. This is a fundamental precept of journalism. Great pictures and sound may make for spectacle, but erroneous information leads the viewer to question our credibility. And if that happens, we're done. It is important that we can be sure that our information is correct and accurate. IF AT ANY TIME YOU ARE NOT SURE OF A STORY'S ACCURACY, RAISE THE QUESTION. It is better to ask the same question several times and be confident about the facts than to not ask any questions and be wrong.

One of the best ways to make sure your story is accurate is to double check your facts and get second source confirmation. It seems like a tired adage, but it is true – “getting the second confirmation” usually means that you're on to something. In addition, using reliable sources can greatly reduce your chance of putting erroneous information on the air.

Correcting errors

While we strive to be accurate all the time, regrettably mistakes happen, especially in a laboratory situation. We don't like them, but they are a reality.

If the errors are substantial, we will broadcast corrections in the appropriate newscast, usually within the same newscast if possible. Corrections must clearly indicate we are clarifying previous information; but be careful not to repeat the misinformation. We should use terms such as “correction,” “explanation,” or “clarification.” We will NOT use the term “retraction” unless approved by the News/Production Director.

After the clarification has been made, we always include “Knightly News apologizes for the error.”

Staging

Staging a story is quite simply telling someone to do something just for the story. It erodes credibility and it is not acceptable in this news operation nor in the industry. NBC news has a very clear policy –

“If it isn't happening, you cannot make it happen. Make no effort to change or dramatize what is happening. Make no effort to influence participants or observers to do, or refrain from doing, anything. Do not ask anyone to do anything again.”

Viewers have become accustomed, however, to certain things. They accept a shot of a reporter and an interviewee walking and talking. They accept that a person who is being interviewed might also have work to do, and that we might show that. They accept that a reporter might be shown asking a question during an interview (reversal questions). While these are sometimes acceptable, they are not encouraged. It is best to talk through video choices with your News/Production Director so that you're clear on what “gray

areas” are acceptable. Indeed, it is your responsibility as a journalist to ask these questions when you are unsure of the answer.

However, we must NEVER lose sight of the guiding principle of broadcast news: never knowingly lie to, or mislead, the viewer.

Doing Ethics

The Poynter Institute for Media Studies (www.poynter.org) is an excellent resource for journalists who are looking for help in their continued growth and development. Bob Steele, considered by many to be the foremost ethicist for working journalists, has come up with several questions to ask yourself if you are concerned about how to handle certain stories. Those questions are listed below.

Poynteronline

Posted, Feb. 29, 2000

Updated, Feb. 29, 2000

Ask These 10 Questions to Make Good Ethical Decisions

By [Bob Steele](#) ([more by author](#))



1. What do I know? What do I need to know?
2. What is my journalistic purpose?
3. What are my ethical concerns?
4. What organizational policies and professional guidelines should I consider?
5. How can I include other people, with different perspectives and diverse ideas, in the decision-making process?
6. Who are the stakeholders -- those affected by my decision? What are their motivations? Which are legitimate?
7. What if the roles were reversed? How would I feel if I were in the shoes of one of the stakeholders?
8. What are the possible consequences of my actions? Short term? Long term?
9. What are my alternatives to maximize my truthtelling responsibility and minimize harm?
10. Can I clearly and fully justify my thinking and my decision? To my colleagues? To the stakeholders? To the public?

http://www.poynter.org/content/content_view.asp?id=4346

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Basic Practices

Graphic footage/pictures

In short, we do not air footage or publish pictures that contain blood, dismembered bodies, depictions of death, or actual deaths on camera. Here the old rule of thumb generally applies: “When in doubt, leave it out.” However, there are exceptions. In those rare cases where the news value of an event warrants using graphic footage or images, vigorous discussion should determine the course of action. The key here is to maintain credibility and expectations, provide news and information, and not shock our viewers.

Identification

Suspects

We only identify persons thought to be involved in a criminal activity when those identifications have been released by law enforcement. Often that is after they have been charged or while police are actively searching for them. Be careful that people aren’t inadvertently identified through secondary identification, such as showing their house, car, or relatives. Also, make sure not to convict anyone of a crime they’re only ACCUSED of committing. If someone has been charged or accused of something, there must be an accuser. Let’s make sure we NAME THAT ACCUSER (i.e., “Orlando Police have charged three men with robbing...” “Seminole County Deputies say George Wilson shot and killed his ex-wife when...”) Just because someone is accused of doing something doesn’t mean they’ve actually done it – make sure we maintain the presumption of innocence until proved guilty.

Minors

While there are no state or federal laws that prohibit any news organization from identifying children named on a public police or criminal report, Knightly News has a policy that children involved in any type of criminal activity typically should not be identified. There are cases, however, when the identity of the minor involved in the crime is significant enough to the story that leaving it out would be shortchanging our viewers. Identification of minors involved in crimes should take place only after vigorous discussion with news management.

Crime Victims

Names make news, and generally they should be used. Most victims and accusers should be identified. The exceptions are of minors and victims of sexual crimes. Any deviation from this policy must be approved by news management.

Race

Race can be a hot button topic in newsrooms. Historically, the news media have unfairly singled out minorities, especially in crime stories. For Knightly News, whether the person who robbed the convenience store, or who was robbed, is black, white, polka-dotted or Martian is not relevant. However, there are exceptions:

- 1) If a description is so detailed that a reasonable viewer would recognize the person on the street – traits such as a scar or elaborate, visible tattoo can be added to race to create a clearer, specific picture of an individual.
- 2) When race is central to the story, as in a gang of whites claiming to be Klan members beats up a black teenager.

Suicide

We do not report suicides, unless the person involved is very well known or the circumstances are particularly unusual.

Missing persons

We generally do not report missing persons unless a member of law enforcement asks for our help in finding that person. Relatives who ask us to air missing person reports should be directed to their local law enforcement agency, as well as be told of our policy.

Anonymous Sources

Sometimes it's necessary to use anonymous sources. This requires the permission of news management. If the identity of the source cannot be divulged to the news director, any information derived from that source cannot be used on the air.

Names

We do not release the names of accident victims before next of kin are notified by the appropriate authorities.

Other practices

Access to tapes

Sometimes people who have been on the news want copies of the stories that have aired. Normally, a television station would contract with an outside agency that would allow the public to purchase copies of the airchecks in which their story ran (Remember, we already give away a “free” copy when it actually airs or hits the web). However, that isn't an option for us here at Knightly News. As a result, we can make dubs of the airchecks if a person requests it. However, there are some things they need to provide:

- 1) A VHS tape or DVD on which to copy the story or thumbdrive
- 2) The date and time that the story ran
- 3) A signed letter stating that they intend to use this tape only in their own personal library, and not for promotional, commercial or legal purposes.

Sometimes people may look at what we do and assume that they can get whatever we shoot, not just the final product. It must be understood that we are not a production service for people who want publicity – we are a news organization. We do NOT give out reporter's notes or field tapes to people who ask without prior approval of the News Director.

Police Scenes

We make every effort to cooperate with law enforcement. When directed to move, obey the order, even if it seems unfair and unnecessary. Continue to cover the story as best you can. News Management will follow up with the appropriate superiors.

Interviewing at Schools

While public schools are by definition "public" and accessible to anyone, they are under the control of administrators who make decisions based upon the welfare of the schools and their students. There are times when principals may decide that having the media on campus is a good thing for the school and the students; there are times when principals may decide the opposite, and keep the media away from the school.

It is always good practice (and an expectation for Knightly News) to request and receive permission from school officials before interviewing anyone on school grounds. If the principal says "no," you can always step OFF school grounds onto a public street and talk to people before they enter and after they leave. This also applies to school buses, where the bus driver has the final authority as to who gets on and who doesn't.

Interviewing Children

Getting soundbites from children can be tricky sometimes, even in the best of circumstances. Generally, the rules stated above in regard to juvenile crime suspects also apply here: get parental permission.

Sometimes that parental permission can be replaced by permission from a principal, guardian, care giver, teacher, etc. It's always best to ask someone in charge; if there's a doubt, contact your news director.

Conflict of Interest

As a student, you no doubt help your friends as they complete their school work (act in a play, be a grip for a production shoot, provide testimonials for speeches, be a research assistant, etc.). Conversely, you want your friends to help you on your assignments. However, that presents problems when you are a journalist. Sometimes your friends, in an effort to help you, may say things in a way that leads your news director (instructor) to believe that the soundbite or video is staged. In addition, while your friends may not realize that they are doing something wrong, they may embellish their stories/facts to the point that the information they provide is made up.

As a rule, you should not interview your friends for stories. Aside from the above mentioned reasons, interviewing friends constitutes a conflict of interest for you, as you might not ask questions of your friends that you normally would ask of someone you don't know. There's nothing wrong with asking your friends for help in finding people to interview, but steer clear of putting your own friends on tape.

Something else to consider related to friends are your Facebook friends. Know how you can appropriately take advantage of social media as a journalist. Make sure you understand the importance of creating a professional page. It's called a "fan page." You may use this fan page to promote stories as well as to find story leads. This will not be considered conflict of interest because your contacts should be viewers or professional contacts.

Another example is what you receive in return for covering events. At its core, journalism is an objective profession, and any appearance that your coverage and reporting has been "bought" or "tainted" can ruin your credibility and reputation. You should not receive any compensation for your reporting, such as dinner, apparel (shirts, jackets), or jobs/internships. Believe it or not, this happens more than you might think. And the line continues to get fuzzy, especially when you cover sporting events where the host team provides food in the media center. When in doubt, ask for guidance.

This also extends to your involvement in on-campus and off-campus organizations. If you are a member of a fraternity, you will want to steer clear of stories involving issues related to Greek involvement on campus. If you are a member of FCA, you will want to avoid stories that focus on the rights of religious organizations on campus. Sometimes these conflicts can be handled by a disclaimer at the top of the story ("In the interest of full disclosure, we should point out that the reporter for this story is a member of..."), but those cases are rare. When in doubt, bring up any potential conflict with your news director.

While this should go without saying, we'll say it anyway: While you are in Knightly News, you cannot work for any other news organization that is considered a direct competitor with Knightly News. Internships with local affiliates and stations can be exceptions, but you should check with news management.

Copyright and Facebook/Twitter, etc.

The Internet is a wonderful communication tool and one that should be embraced by news organizations for many reasons, including information gathering, and the production and the dissemination of news. Companies spend millions of dollars researching, building, and hosting websites for their news product.

No doubt you have accounts on at least one (if not several) social media outlet(s). There are two main issues that come into play here: copyright and your reputation.

Your reputation: Posting pictures of your most recent weekend party or your new two piece bathing suit may seem like fun for you and friends, but it can send a negative image of who you to people who think you're credible. Increasingly, journalists are using Facebook and other social networking sites to connect with news viewers/consumers. Employers are also using social networking to find out more about prospective employees. Your reputation is your career: the minute people don't believe you, you are useless as a reporter.

With that in mind, it's a good idea to keep your social networking sites as "vanilla" as possible. Remove pictures that are, shall we say, unflattering. Remove tags of yourself in pictures that you think are not appropriate for your parents to see (a good rule of thumb). Tone down your posts and status updates. You may even want to consider a second profile, one that is more professional in nature and becomes your identity to the "social networking" world.

Copyright: Posting your stories to your social media pages may be a violation of copyright. While you may have done the leg work for the story that bears your name and voice, that story was completed using equipment from the Nicholson School of Communication and aired on the channel that the Nicholson School programs. As such, the Nicholson School owns the copyright to that story; not you. While it may not seem like a big deal to post a news story, it can have serious copyright and other legal ramifications, as interview subjects may not realize that their words and pictures may appear on the Internet (of course, you will have informed them of that when you interview them). In addition, you don't want to be the next "buzz on the 'Net" because someone downloaded your story, changed it, and reposted it in an unflattering light with your name on it.

Bottom line: if you are going to link your personal pages to your stories or post your stories to personal spaces (Facebook, blogs, Twitter feeds), get permission from your news director.

The Radio-Television-Digital News Association has some worthwhile guidelines to consider. You can find those in the appendix.

Newsroom organization

Knightly News

Knightly News is set up to run as an actual newsroom because, of course, we ARE an actual newsroom. Our work airs live on Campus Cable, then during the following week on the UCF Channel and Brighthouse Cable. Therefore we have a hierarchy in place to help you succeed in this major and in this profession.

News Director: Your news director is your instructor of record. Most of the time, you will have two people overseeing the newscasts, both of whom should be considered your news directors. One will typically focus on content and editorial decisions, the other will work on visual storytelling and production techniques. Your News Director is the one who not only helps you get your story on the air; s/he also helps you understand what is needed to make the story work.

Production Director: The production director is in charge of the technical crew that helps us get our program on the air. S/he is also often in charge of the visual story telling component of the program. When you are working with your production director on videography, editing, or production graphics, you should take those suggestions as seriously as you would any content suggestions. The Production Director's decisions are as final as the News Director's.

Producer: The producer is in charge of the newscast and the order in which the stories flow. S/he also makes sure that reporters and photographers have what they need in order to complete their work. In our news operation, the producer is often also the assignment editor/manager, which means that s/he helps assign stories to reporters and is kept up to date with the status of the stories. **BE SURE TO KEEP IN CONTACT WITH YOUR PRODUCER.** If you have any update on your story (change in direction, interview fallen through, completion of story), make sure you communicate that to your producer as quickly as possible.

Assistant Producer: This person is generally responsible for the odds and ends that get by the producer. The AP also makes sure that any graphics that are needed for stories are sent to the graphics editor/creator. S/he is also responsible for double checking the spelling of supers and full screen graphics. Basically, another set of eyes to help out.

Photographer: Chances are your first job will be what we call a "one man band," and what others are starting to call "backpack journalists"- that means you will do everything (shoot, write, voice, edit, front for live shot). However, we also want you to gain experience working with a partner, which is why we encourage you to have someone shoot your story with you. The photographer's job is perhaps the most important. Without someone to shoot compelling, relevant video and capture telling natural sound and interviews, we might as well be doing charades on camera. A good photographer/reporter team can take a seemingly nothing story and turn it into an award winner. In this setting, you will probably do both: one man band, and serve as a

photographer. The photographer's voice is as important as the reporter's, because the story is a team effort. When you are serving as a photographer, please make sure you **MAKE** the time to think about the story visually; what shots convey to the story the best? What pictures are going to make the viewer pay attention to this story? If I had to tell this story without words, how would I?

Reporter: The reporter's job is self-explanatory: to report. Not editorialize, not sensationalize, not criticize, but to report. Period. Like all the people in our newsroom, the reporter is up to date on what is happening in the community and knows what events are coming up. If you are assigned a beat, you should be checking in with that beat a couple of times a day and be ready with at least two viable story ideas. If you are a general assignment reporter, you should be looking for ways to tell stories that nobody else is. Make your name by finding the story that people say, "Wow," when they finish watching. But remember, you are a reporter. You will want to have your news/production director approve your script/videography **BEFORE** you start editing your story. Let's repeat that: You will want to have your news/production director approve your script/videography **BEFORE** you start editing your story. Any reporter who puts a story on the air without getting management approval is subject to disciplinary action (i.e., failing the course).

Anchor: This is perhaps the position that people want the most but understand the least. An anchor's job is not to *read* the news. An anchor's job is to *deliver* the news. Anchors must be able to connect with viewers, be able to understand the stories they're delivering, and be able to convey information in a manner that is easy to comprehend and understand. But anchors must also be able to make editorial decisions, to understand why a story might not be as important as it seems, and to understand why another story is *more* important than it might seem. Anchors need to be calm, composed, and correct. They need to have a lot of game upstairs. They also often are expected to report during a newscast in which they anchor. Make no mistake: anchoring a fun job that can take you a lot of places, but you have to *earn* that job. You do that by working your way through the ranks. You must keep and maintain your credibility, because it is the viewers who grant you that credibility.

Web Producer/Multimedia Producer: This person generally writes or edits or reporter's stories and posts them online. This person should be able to multi-task and make changes on the fly. If a story changes, he/she should be the first one to know what's happening and quickly verify and make those changes on the web. It is the web producer's job to gather the news, whether it's by communicating with the reporter who is covering the story or by making in-house phone calls and conducting his/her own interviews. In addition, he/she may need to produce and post video online to enhance the story.

EJ2

Chances are you will have people in the same jobs as the ones listed above, with the exception of the Production Director (because you're not doing a weekly newscast). However, you should expect to pay attention to the same rules that those in Knightly

News adhere to. Make sure you get someone, preferably your News Director, to look over your story.

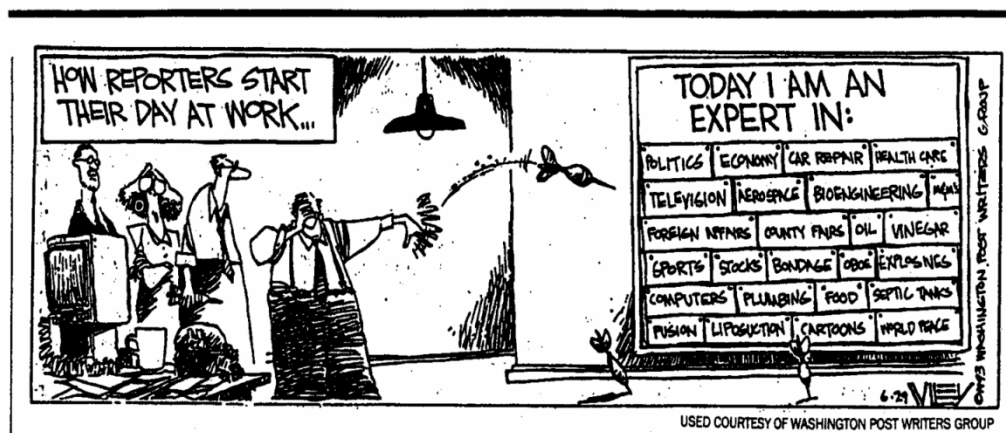
Your weekly news meetings might be different than those in Knightly News, but feel free to join in the meetings for the newscast.

EJ1

You are in the same situation as EJ2, with the additional understanding that you will not normally have photographers, and will not usually be doing newscasts. However, you are always welcome to come in, learn, and provide input into the Knightly News product.

Weekly Routine

Knightly News operates on a weekly basis, but work is being done every day of the week, and even on the weekends, to make sure the shows get on the air. Reporters, producers, and photographers in Knightly News regularly put in 20-30 hours a week into making sure their stories get on the air.



Weekly story meeting

The weekly story meeting is where the news operation convenes to talk about the newscast for that Friday. It is important for all journalists in the newsroom (meaning, everyone) to come in with viable story ideas that are already in development. It is not a good idea to come in and say, "I haven't made any calls yet." Make sure you have an initial idea about what stories you'd like to cover and why they are important to our community. Stories that don't impact the University community belong somewhere else.

If you can't explain why the story is important to us, then it's time to either find out more or move on to another story.

In this meeting the producer(s) will put story ideas up on the board, followed by an explanation from the reporter/photographer as to why the story is important. The producer(s) will typically start outlining the show for that week, but that is by no means a final rundown. Just because your story is listed as a VO, go into it prepared for a PKG. You never know when that can happen. Likewise, be prepared for a Monday PKG to turn into a Friday VO/SOT, or a simple Live shot. The key is to be flexible.

During the week

After the meeting (often in the MINUTES following the meeting), you are expected to continue to work on your story. Notice that we said *continue*: if you are waiting until Monday to start work (except in the case of breaking news), you are behind. During the T-W-Th stretch, you'll be finalizing video, double checking spelling, working on your script.

Tuesday

Don't worry if you don't have all your video yet, but you should have most of it. Because we operate on a weekly basis, it is not uncommon for people to shoot their stories over a couple of days. By this point you should have a decent idea of your story's direction and a rough draft of a script. Work with your producers and your photographers to get some idea of what you lack and what you have plenty of. Conversations with your news/production directors are a good idea. **If you've REALLY gotten a head start**, you can submit your script for final approval and get done early.

Wednesday

You should have shot all your video and have a close to final draft of a script. You should be able to tell how much time your story will take and how it fits into the newscast. Try to transition between your story and the one before it so the newscast flows. Be open to suggestions about what is needed. Also, you should have your supervisor ready to look over the final script. Producers should have an idea of what stories are working and what aren't, as well as what their backup plans are. You should have met with your director by now so that s/he can have an idea of what is to come. AP's should have finished whatever stories they're working on for the week and start to jump in with the producers to help.

Thursday

By 4pm, your story should be approved for air. If it's not, it won't go on. You will want to make sure that the producer knows the status of your story and how long it is. If the producer says it's too long/too short, then it's too long/too short, and you'll need to change it. Producers, you should have your shows finished by now and should be finalizing teases and transitions, as well as meeting with your directors. AP's should be checking spelling and working with directors to print up a final CG list by 5pm.

Friday-show day

9AM – Everyone should be in the newsroom. You'll want that extra time to make sure that everything is ready to go. Reporters and photographers should be double-checking with their beats/sources to make sure nothing has changed since the stories were shot (a lot can happen in two or three days). Beat calls should be made so that we have the most important information available. Tease tapes should be to the editors

10AM – Make your calls to your live guests to make sure that they actually are coming. The weathercaster should be getting the temperatures and the forecast maps ready. Reporters and editors should have finished package edits and their final tape times. Tapes should be made available to the production crew so that they can do a quick run-through and find out any problem areas. The producer and the director should meet to go over camera blocking and any changes that took place from earlier in the week.

10:30AM – Scripts for the director should have been printed by now and should be delivered to the director. Rundowns should be with the production crew. Anchors should be reading over scripts to double check them.

Noon – Radio (when we have it) goes on the air. You should be available to help if and when you are called upon. Otherwise, if you can get lunch, do it. Make sure you're bringing it back to the building so you're close by in case anyone needs you. Also – be sure to let your producer know where you're going so no one is surprised when they can't find you.

12:30pm - rehearsal – you should be working your way into the newsroom to sit on the set, go over scripts and blocking. Tape editors should help out with order and be at the beck and call of the producers, directors, etc.

1:30pm – Showtime!

2:00PM – We should help the production crew strike the set if possible – often that means getting out the way. After the set is struck, we should plan on staying in the studio for a joint post mortem about the show. The idea is not to blame anyone for something going wrong, but to make sure that whatever happened during the show is addressed.

3PM – News students head back to the newsroom to make sure that we have an idea of what's going on next week.

Operational Practices/Procedures

Field and Library tapes/files

We have a library system for all original video that we shoot. Reporters are expected to either edit their stories onto a library tape/file or to dub it from the computer to a library

tape/file. Please provide the appropriate slug for the story on the spine of the tape or the name of the file.

There may come a time when you need to find video from previous shows or semesters. Please do not leave those tapes lying around or outside of their cases. We need to keep these in order so that we keep our library system usable.

It is the producer's responsibility to update the tape library in each show. Make sure that you put the library tape number in the TAPE ID column in the rundown before you archive them.

Length of Stories

Vo

A standard VO is rarely longer than 25-30 seconds, and we should keep it as such. Typically you have five to ten seconds of on camera introduction of the story, then video and copy for about 15-20 seconds. If you think the story needs to be longer, ask for help. It might be better as a live shot or a tracked vo (essentially a pkg without soundbites).

Script length: 25-30 seconds

Video length: 50 seconds

VOSOT

Vosots generally last only about 40-45 seconds. The same format as the vo is followed: 5-10 seconds on camera, then about 10-12 seconds of copy and video. ON A SEPARATE TAPE AND SCRIPT comes the sot (about 10-15 seconds), then the five to ten second vo tag to the story – YOU WILL ALWAYS HAVE VO TAG, as opposed to coming back on camera. Again, don't make it longer. If it has to be that long, it might as well be a pkg.

Script: 40-45 seconds

Video before the bite: 50 seconds

Video after the bite: 30 seconds

Bite length: 10-15 seconds

PKG

Packages are usually 1:30 tape time, with a 10-15 second lead in and a 5-10 second tag. Live intros and tag for packages add time to the total product, and should be scripted so that they make sense. In other words, give the anchors something to say, and let the reporter introduce the story.

There are three elements of the package script: the Intro (I-Mills construction), the Package itself (P-Mills construction) and the anchor tag (T-Mills construction). We also close out our packages (and live shots for that matter) with "in (Orange County), Tim Brown, U-C-F Knightly News."

Script: 10-15 second lead in

Pkg: 1:30 MAX on tape **with one second of preroll before opening nats/bite (with the voice track starting a second later) and plenty of pad afterward.** This means that you want a second of natural sound to draw the viewer into the story, then start your voice track.

Anchor Tag: 5-10 seconds

NOTE WELL: As you can see up above, we ALWAYS put video pad on our tapes. Make sure that you have AT LEAST fifteen (15) seconds of pad after the last shot of usable video. The pad should start as an extension of the last shot (so there is no edit), and after the first five seconds of pad you can edit other USABLE shots to extend your pad for the fifteen (15) seconds.

Look to Appendices for script examples.

Supers

Super Times

Super times should be on the intro page of the script, not in the package. They should be in the final printing of the scripts so that the director does not have to wonder where the come in. Times start at :00 from the first video (not time code on the tape).

Length

Supers should be up for at least five seconds. If your soundbite is shorter than that, you will need to find a way to identify your interview subject before the soundbite. Word to the wise: if it's shorter than 5 seconds, it had better be the best soundbite in the world.

Format

All supers will be typed in upper and lower case. You must have supers in the script for a script to be approved. And yes – spelling counts.

Locator supers tell the viewer the basics of the story (slug line/headline) and where the video was shot. This super is used on every piece of video we put on the air. A locator should be a two line super (2ln button on EZNews) under the where/when format, the description is on the top line, the location on the bottom line i.e.:

Obama Announces Economic Recovery Plan
Washington. D.C.

Just to repeat, locator supers appear on every piece of video we air. It will be the FIRST super and should come off the very top of the story. The only exception is if we have a pre-produced piece image (mugshot, map, etc.) as the first video in a story (which would be rare).

Name supers tell the viewer the name of the person on the screen at the time. Most of the time it includes a second line with that person's title in the context of the story.

Examples:

John Wilson	Amy Sedaris	Sgt. Derrick Jones	Gov. Jeb Bush
UCF Spokesman	Comedienne	Orlando Police Dept.	(no 2 nd line)

Note that we do NOT super the President of the United States.

Also note that you should avoid commas ("Pet Store Owner", instead of "Owner, Pet Store"). Keep in mind that you may run out of room on the second line – try to keep it short. If "spokesman" won't fit (see Derrick Jones), then give the organization. Also, the second line can be a descriptor and not necessarily a formal title (i.e., "witnessed accident" or 20 year veteran").

Reporter/talent supers (TAL button on EZNews) tell us the name of the reporter and where s/he is during the story/standup. If the location of the place isn't known (i.e., you get a feed pkg), then "reporting" will suffice:

Tim Brown	Stephen Colbert	Garrick Francis
Orlando	UCF Campus	Reporting

When the reporter is doing a live shot, simply put their name on the top line and "Knightly News" on the bottom line. Make sure to include the "live" bug in your script formatting.

Anchor supers are simple, one line supers with the anchor's (or anchors') name(s). They should appear EVERY TIME WE SEE THE ANCHOR FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A BLOCK. That means that when we come back from commercial break, we should see the anchor cg's when we see the anchors. When you put them into EZNews, make sure you put them in order: i.e. if Tim Brown is on the left (Anchor 1) and Wendy Allen is on the right (Anchor 2), your CG will read Tim Brown/Wendy Allen.

Courtesy supers give credit for another source of video and take two lines (2ln button). Note that we do NOT super CBS Newspath, as we are a registered affiliate for that newsource. What we would do is super one line for Newspath video.

Augusta, GA	New York City
	Courtesy: ESPN

However, we may get video from other places, such as movie studios that want to promote their films:

"A History of Violence"
New Line Cinema

Scripting instructions

All voice-overs will include locator supers right off the top. VOSOTs will include a locator super off the top and a name super during the actual soundbite. PKG supers will include a locator, a reporter's name, and as many name supers as are needed, complete with their hit times (starting at :00 from first video). If a person appears more than once in a pkg, they only need one super for their first appearance.

Things you should know:

1. Length – the maximum length for a super is 20 characters on the first line and 30 characters on the second line. Don't feel you have to use all of them. Keep it simple.
2. Political titles: Follow these guidelines
 - a. Florida Governor
Gov. Jeb Bush
 - b. Out of state governor
Gov. Mark Sanford
(R) South Carolina
 - c. State Lawmakers
State Rep. Bob Allen
(R) Orange County

State Rep. Bruce Antone
(D) Orange County
 - d. U.S. Congress

Rep. Jefferson Miller
(R) Florida
Rep. Corrine Brown
(D) Florida
 - e. U.S. Senate
Sen. Bill Nelson
(D) Florida
3. File Video - The word "file video" does not take the place of the locator super. Because we've had to look up the video to use, we should always know where and when this video was shot, and should super it as such. The only exception is when we're using generic video (tourists on the beach, at Disney World), in which case we would not use a date (1ln super button).

Teases/Headlines

Teases are designed to let our viewers know what story is coming up later in our broadcast. They can be among the most difficult parts of the show to write. One rule of thumb is to think of two sentences: the first tells us what the story is; the second tells us what we'll find out when we see it.

Example:

(Anchor 1) – Still ahead on Knightly News: A bear walked across U-C-F's campus today. We'll tell you why university officials say it won't be the last time.

(Anchor 2) – The Knights football team is looking for its second win in a row against the Florida Gators. George Bagley has a look at sports when we come back.

Notice that we didn't have the "and" between the anchor reads. We want to avoid having the teases become one long drawn out sentence with a lot of "ands" or "alsos" or "in additions." Keep it straightforward and simple.

Make sure that you give each anchor enough to read; that holds true for ANY two shot.

Live Shots

Live shots add a different dimension to a newscast and can be used for many different reasons. You might want to change the pace of the newscast by adding a live reporter. You might want a reporter to give late breaking information on a story s/he is following. You might want to let the reporter talk a little bit more than just what they can show in video. Regardless, live shots should not be abused: too many live shots can actually slow down a newscast, and reduce the effectiveness of the anchors.

When scripting a live shot, make sure you are giving each anchor (if you start on a two shot) enough to read. Don't split a sentence in half and have each anchor read part of it. Give the anchor enough to read to set up the live reporter (and thereby give the crew enough time to set up the next shot). You'll typically go from a tight shot of an anchor to a double box set up that includes the anchor (on the left side) and the reporter (on the right). Sometimes you may go from a two shot (if it's the lead story, or you're transitioning from one segment to the next) to a double box. IT IS IMPERATIVE that you work with your director to make sure that the camera blocking can accomplish what you're envisioning.

General Video/PKG practices

Use of commercials

Commercials may not be used on our newscasts unless you get permission from the News/Production director. You may want to use a commercial if you're talking about a specific political candidate, a well-known individual, or a local business under investigation. But advertisers pay for these commercials to be made, and it is not appropriate for us to use them without proper permission. Basically, the rule is that you should find another piece of video unless the commercial is essential to the story; in that case, you ask your supervisors.

Use of Music

All use of music must have management approval. In short, we don't own much music for ourselves, so we have to pay if we run music that belongs to someone else. In this age of digital file sharing and downloads, it may seem easy to grab a track from a CD and put it in your story. Editorially, there are issues with using music (we rarely do it); legally, we can get into trouble if we don't document these things. Make sure you check with your supervisor before using any music.

Video/Audio Quality

We are a newsroom laboratory, and as such we are constantly striving to improve our product. We must be continuously vigilant against poor video or audio quality (shaky video, video out of frame, low audio, discolored video, poor lighting, poor recording, etc). The reason is two-fold: 1) we want our viewers to see us as a credible news organization committed to quality, and 2) we want you to have the best tape possible when you leave here.

Natural Sound

It is important here to differentiate between general natural sound and natural sound used for effect in a story. ALL VIDEO ON OUR NEWSCASTS will have natural sound (also called "background sound" or "ambient sound") at the appropriate level. Beyond that, you may find some pieces of natural sound that help move the story along or add to it, such as weights clanging in a gym, speedboats moving along on the lake, or the growl of a dog. You should take great care in the field to make sure that you adequately record natural sound for your stories. You should also take great care in listening to your tapes as you log them: you may find a piece of sound that helps the viewer EXPERIENCE the story more effectively. That said, you should also make sure that you're not throwing in natural sound just for the sake of it. If it doesn't move the story along, don't use it.

Appendix A: EZNews TV Script Samples

The commands we use in EZNews are designed to help us not only learn proper scripting format, but also make sure that our scripts are uniform for both news and production. It seems corny to say so, but in broadcast news EVERYONE has to be on the SAME PAGE, literally. If we have inconsistent formatting for our scripts, that leads to uncertainty in the control room. Uncertainty leads to problems in the control room. Problems lead to tension. Tension leads to bad shows.

Below are several different types of scripts, along with highlighted notes that tell you where you can find the commands and how you can improve your scripting. Much of what you will see here is pretty basic. It just takes a little bit of time to get into the habit.

Basics

There are two types of print views in EZNews: The “standard” and the “editor” view. The “editor” view is basically what you see on the screen. Here is an example of a VO script in the “editor” view. Note how it looks just like you would see it on the screen. Beside it is the “standard” version, which is how the script will print out.

V-VOSOT SAMPLE [VO] ERT:0.25/SOT:0.00/TRT:0.25	(Samples Prompter)	Script A-2 Pg 1	VO-sample [VO] ERT:0.32/SOT:0.00/TRT:0.32	(Samples Prompter)	Script A-1 Pg 1
« (TimBrown / TIGHT) »	RESIDENTS IN ONE PART OF EAST ORLANDO SAY THEY ARE TIRED OF WAITING IN LINE ON ALAFAYA TRAIL.		SS-Over The Shoulder .. # (UCF Logo) "Medical School"	(TimBrown / OTS)	OFFICIALS AT U-C-F ARE CELEBRATING TODAY. EARLIER THIS WEEK THEY FOUND OUT THEY CAN GO AHEAD AND START BUILDING A MEDICAL SCHOOL.
« Take VO Run...:30 » « CG-LowThird 2 Line (at. 00-05) Alafaya Trail Monday »	THIS IS WHAT THE MORNING COMMUTE LOOKS LIKE ON MOST DAYS COMING OUT OF THE AVALON PARK AND STONEYBROOK SUBDIVISIONS. YOU CAN SEE HOW THE CARS ARE LINED UP. ALMOST LIKE A PARKING LOT. RESIDENTS SAY THEY WERE PROMISED A NEW, WIDER ROAD FOUR YEARS AGO, AND ARE ANGRY THAT IT HASN'T MATERIALIZED.		Take VO Run...:30 CG-LowThird 2 Line (at. 00-05) UCF Campus Wednesday		PRESIDENT HITT AND OTHER UNIVERSITY LEADERS HELD A PARTY ON WEDNESDAY AFTER THEY GOT THE WORD FROM THE STATE'S BOARD OF GOVERNORS. DR. HITT SAYS THAT CONSTRUCTION SHOULD BEGIN SOON, AND THE FIRST STUDENTS SHOULD WALK THROUGH THE DOORS IN 2008. BOTH U-C-F AND FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY IN MIAMI GOT PERMISSION TO BUILD MEDICAL SCHOOLS ON THEIR CAMPUSES.
« (Director Note) WIPE TO SOT »					
Printed by timbrown, on Sunday, October 08, 2006 03:43:33 PM			Printed by timbrown, on Wednesday, September 20, 2006 10:57:32 AM		

Below you'll see versions and notes of how to write scripts in EZNews. Unless otherwise noted, the versions here are printed in “standard” format; that is, the view that you would have if you were to print it up and present to the production crew.

VO Script Example

VO-sample [VO]
ERT:0:28/SOT:0:00/TRT:0:28

(Samples Prompter)

Script A-1
Pg 1

(TimBrown / OTS)

This is the "Anchor" command, the
"Anc" button on EZNews

SS-Over The Shoulder .. #
(UCF Logo)
"Medical School"

This is the "OTS"
button.

This is the "VO"
button

Take VO Runs.. :30
CG-LowThird 2 Line (at.. 00-05)
UCF Med. School gets approval
Millican Hall

This is the CG button.. lower third 2-line. Notice
that the time is for the RUNNING time of the
script, not the timecode.

OFFICIALS AT U-C-F ARE
CELEBRATING TODAY.

EARLIER THIS WEEK THEY
FOUND OUT THEY CAN GO
AHEAD AND START BUILDING A
MEDICAL SCHOOL.

Note that we indent, hitting
"tab" twice to create a visual
cue that there is a new line

PRESIDENT HITT AND
OTHER UNIVERSITY LEADERS
HELD A PARTY ON WEDNESDAY
AFTER THEY GOT THE WORD
FROM THE STATE'S BOARD OF
GOVERNORS.

DR. HITT SAYS THAT
CONSTRUCTION SHOULD BEGIN
SOON, AND THE FIRST
STUDENTS SHOULD WALK
THROUGH THE DOORS IN 2008.

BOTH U-C-F AND FLORIDA
INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY IN
MIAMI GOT PERMISSION TO
BUILD MEDICAL SCHOOLS ON
THEIR CAMPUSES.

Printed by timbrown, on Friday, January 20, 2012 04:13:45 PM

VOSOT Script Example

V-VOSOT SAMPLE [VO/]
ERT:0:22/SOT:0:00/TRT:0:22

(Samples Prompter)

Script A-2
Pg 1

(TimBrown / TIGHT)

RESIDENTS IN ONE PART OF
EAST ORLANDO SAY THEY ARE
TIRED OF WAITING IN LINE ON
ALAFAYA TRAIL.

Take VO Runs.. :30
CG-LowThird_2 Line (at.. 00-05)
Alafaya Trail Widening Project
East Orange Co.

THIS IS WHAT THE MORNING
COMMUTE LOOKS LIKE ON
MOST DAYS COMING OUT OF
THE AVALON PARK AND
STONEBROOK SUBDIVISIONS.

YOU CAN SEE HOW THE
CARS ARE LINED UP, ALMOST
LIKE A PARKING LOT.

RESIDENTS SAY THEY WERE
PROMISED A NEW, WIDER
ROAD FOUR YEARS AGO, AND
ARE ANGRY THAT IT HASN'T
MATERIALIZED.

Here we use the "A" button to tell the anchor on the
prompter to stop talking for the soundbite.

Anchor Note .. (((*****STOP*****)))
(Director Note)
WIPE TO SOT

Note how we use a "Director Note," or "D" button to
tell the director to take the next tape.

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Take SOT Runs.. 0:16 .."...drives me nuts!"

CG-LowThird_2 Line (at.. 00-05)

Joe Smith

Commuter

CG-LowThird_2 Line (at.. 09-14)

Jane Wilson

Commuter

The SOT goes on a separate script and separate tape/file. To point out the SOT command, we use the SOT button. We also make sure that we put the CG's underneath the SOT command, IN ORDER that they run, with times.

Here you'll want to use the "Bdy" button, as it allows you to put your transcription in without adding time. It also means that the soundbite won't appear in the prompter.

[Sound Bite]

<Joe Smith/Commuter> "I've spent 30 minutes in this line and I've gone three miles. I'm going to be late for work."

<Jane Wilson/Commuter> "These county leaders keep promising one thing after another and then don't deliver. It drives me nuts!"

Continue VO Runs.. :30

(TimBrown)

Notice how we leave the "SHOT" portion of the anchor commands blank when continuing VO.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER
LINDA STEWART SAYS THE
MONEY TO EXPAND ALAFAYA
TRAIL IS THERE BUT IS TIED UP
IN THE BIDDING PROCESS.
SHE TELLS KNIGHTLY NEWS
SHE'S NOT SURE WHEN
CONSTRUCTION WILL BEGIN.

PKG Script Example

I-PKG SAMPLE [COPY]
ERT:0:24/SOT:1:30/TRT:1:54

(Samples Prompter)

Script A-4
Pg 1

(/ TWO-SHOT)

(WendyA)

This is an example of a two shot lead. Notice the shot command first, then the anchor read. Notice also that both anchors have something substantive to say.

PEOPLE WHO LIVE OFF THE
SOUTHERN END OF ALAFAYA
TRAIL SAY THEY ARE NOT
HAPPY WITH COUNTY
LEADERS.

AND THEY ARE READY TO
TAKE ACTION.

(TimBrown)

MANY OF THEM HAVE
COMPLAINED TO THE COUNTY
COMMISSION ABOUT HOW
CROWDED THE ROADS ARE IN
THE AREA.

(Director Note)

TAKE TIGHT SHOT

(TimBrown / TIGHT)

Pay attention to this. We put the "Director Note" or "D" command here for the director. When we put the type of shot in the Anchor command ("Anc" button), the turn to tight will appear on the teleprompter. You can also put "TURN" using the "A" button, if you wish.

BUT THE SOLUTION MAY NOT
BE AS SIMPLE AS SOME
PEOPLE THINK.

KNIGHTLY NEWS REPORTER
GEORGE BAGLEY SHOWS US
HOW THE RESIDENTS ARE
GETTING THEIR MESSAGE
ACROSS, AND THE TOUGH
ROAD THEY FACE.

Anchor Note .. ((*****STOP*****))
Take PKG Runs.. 1:30 ..std outcue"

CG-LowThird_2 Line (at.. 00-05)
Alafaya Trail Road Widening
East Orange Co.

CG-LowThird_2 Line (at.. 15-20)
Jack Johnson

Notice how the pkg ("PKG") command and the cg's are on the same page. Notice also that the CG times are based on the running time of the PKG, not the time code on the tape. Make sure your time is accurate. "STD outcue" refers to "In Orange County, George Bagley, UCF Knightly News." If the outcue is different, note that.

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Avalon Park Resident
CG-LowThird_2 Line (at.. 25-30)
Jane Jones

Stoneybrook Resident
CG-Talent/Reporter (at.. 30-35)
George Bagley
South Alafaya Trail

Notice how we make sure to include all of our
CG's here, even when they go to another page.
PAY CLOSE ATTENTION to the
Talent/Reporter CG, which is the "T" button.

CG-LowThird_2 Line (at.. 1:05-1:10)
Linda Stewart
Dist. 4 Commissioner

**WS of slow traffic, NATS of honking
(traffic jam 1)**

A lot of things to notice here. First, the blue area is a shot command, using the "Shot" button. You have a place to put both the description of the shot and the time code (for tapes) or label (for FCP). That tells you, your editor, and your copy editor what video you're going to use for each voice track. It must be in each pkg script.

[Reporter Track]
Track 1
THIS IS NOT A PARKING LOT AT THE
LOCAL MALL.

**Driver Frustrated with traffic
(frustration 1)**

Notice also that we're putting the reporter track in a command. That's the "Bdy" button on EZNews, which means the body of the package. You'll see a drop down box that lets you choose which format you expect it to be, such as Reporter Track.....

[Reporter Track]
Track 2
THIS IS HOW JACK JOHNSON GETS TO
WORK IN THE MORNING.

....or soundbite, as the case may be. You have a place to put the time code or tape label in each place.

[Sound Bite]
Tape 1 10:50-11:00
Jack Johnson "I'm telling you, this is pathetic. I left the house at 6:30, it's now 7:00, and I've only gone four miles. And there's no other way for me to get to the highway."

[Sound Bite]
Tape 1 15:43-15:52
Jane Jones/Stoneybrook resident "I was supposed to be at work ten minutes ago. I normally try to get out early, but half the time I'm still late. I thought the county was supposed to fix these problems."

Note here that you are using the "Bdy" button here as well - you have a choice in the drop down box for the standup.

[Stand-Up]
Standup 4
THE COUNTY WAS SUPPOSED TO FIX
THOSE PROBLEMS - AT LEAST COUNTY
LEADERS SAID SO FIVE YEARS AGO.
THE PLAN WAS TO WIDEN ALAFAYA
TRAIL TO SIX LANES.
BUT RESIDENTS IN THIS AREA SAY
THEIR COMMISSIONER HAS BROKEN HER

The times here are the time codes of where these shots and soundbites are on your tape. If you're using FCP, and you've labeled each shot, then you can simply put in the label...

PROMISE

[Sound Bite]
Tape #2 6:50-6:53
Linda Stewart "It's not as easy as waving a magic wand."

STEWART TWO SHOT
((7:30-7:34))

[Reporter Track]
Track 7
LINDA STEWART IS THE COMMISSIONER FOR SOUTHEAST ORANGE COUNTY.
SHE SAYS SHE -DID- TELL PEOPLE THE ROAD WOULD GET WIDER.

REVERSE TRAFFIC JAM, tight of wheels
(Jam 2, wheels 6)

[Reporter Track]
Track 8
SHE SAYS SHE -DID- TELL PEOPLE THE ROAD WOULD GET WIDER.
BUT THAT WAS BEFORE OTHER PROJECTS IN THE COUNTY CAME ALONG.

[Sound Bite]
7:00-7:13
"You have a case where construction of the 408 gets more priority, because so many more people use that road than use South Alafaya trail. The expansion is still on the board and is still going to happen. It's just not as soon as people want."

WOMAN SIGHING W/HEAD IN HANDS
(head frustrate 8)

[Reporter Track]
Track 12
RESIDENTS SAY IT'S TOO LATE TO MAKE
EXCUSES.
THEY JUST WANT SOMETHING DONE
TO FIX THE PROBLEM.

LIGHT CHANGE RED/GREEN
(light change)

[Reporter Track]
Track 15
AND THEY DON'T WANT IT TO TAKE AS
LONG AS THEIR MORNING COMMUTE.

brake lights
(lights 4)

[Reporter Track]
sig out
IN ORANGE COUNTY, GEORGE BAGLEY,
U-C-F KNIGHTLY NEWS.

(TimBrown / TIGHT)

Notice that we use a separate page for the tag, and that we come back to the anchor who introduced the story. Keep the tag short.

COMMISSIONER STEWART
ALSO SAYS SHE WILL HOLD A
PUBLIC HEARING ON THE ROAD
PROJECT IN THE NEXT FEW
WEEKS.

Live PKG Script Example

I-Live Shot []
ERT:0:17/SOT:0:00/TRT:0:17

(Samples Prompter)

Script A-7
Pg 1

(WendyA / TIGHT)

Basically here we're splitting up the basic intro so that both the anchor and the reporter can own a part of it. The idea is not to make it TOO much longer, but we do want both people to have something relevant to say.

TIMBER CREEK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ARE SUPPOSED HAVE A NEW HOME NEXT YEAR.

BUT NOT EVERYONE LIKES THE IDEA OF MOVING ACROSS THE STREET.

Take Double Box
CG - Double Box
Wendy Allen / Tim Brown
Knightly Newsroom

(WendyA / DOUBLE-BOX)

We'll have two parts... the I part, which is standard, and the L part, which is new (and means Live).

TIM BROWN JOINS US FROM THE KNIGHTLY NEWSROOM.

TIM, PARENTS SAY THEY'VE BEEN TRYING TO STOP THIS PLAN.

WHY IS THAT?

L-Live Shot []
ERT:0:12/SOT:1:10/TRT:1:22

(Samples Prompter)

Script A-8
Pg 1

Take Double Box
CG - Double Box
Wendy Allen / Tim Brown
Knightly Newsroom

Notice here how we have the reporter in the newsroom talking during a double box. This is something you and the director should work on. Sometimes we need more conversation in the double box, sometimes we don't. The key is to make sure that you and the director are on the same page.

(TimBrown / DOUBLE-BOX)

WENDY, IT ALL HAS TO DO
WITH MONEY AND POWER.

(Director Note)
Take Newsroom Full

(TimBrown / NEWSROOM)

SPECIFICALLY, THE MONEY
THAT THE SCHOOL DISTRICT
HAS ALREADY PUT INTO
RENOVATING THE OLD
SCHOOL, AND THE POWER
THAT PARENTS FEEL THEY
HAVE, BUT IS BEING IGNORED.

Notice how we've put in a
"director note" (D), but also
made sure that the command
goes in the anchor read when it
changes.

Take PKG Runs.. 1:10 ..std outcue"
CG-LowThird_2 Line (at.. 00-05)
TimberCreek High School Expansion
East Orange Co.
CG-LowThird_2 Line (at.. 15-20)
Joe Smith
TimberCreek H.S. Principal
CG-LowThird_2 Line (at.. 30-35)
Tim Brown
Orange County
CG-LowThird_2 Line (at.. 50-55)
Jane Wilson
TimberCreek Parent

Notice how all the CG's are
on the same page as the
"intro" of the package. THE
PKG SCRIPT remains the
same as the above example.

This is how you get into the LIVE portions. You should use this as a
starting point for how you live VO's, VOSOTS, etc.

Printed by timbrown, on Friday, January 20, 2012 04:15:54 PM

(Director Note)

Take Newsroom Remote Shot Full

(TimBrown / NEWSROOM)

Here we have the tag for the live shot.
Notice how we come back to the reporter
full in the newsroom, then we go to the
double box. In essence, we're getting out
of the story in the reverse order from
which we got into it.

THE PARENTS SAY THEY
ARE PLANNING TO TAKE THEIR
ARGUMENT TO THE BOARD OF
EDUCATION TONIGHT AT ITS
REGULAR MEETING

A BOARD SPOKESMAN SAYS
THAT THE GROUP IS NOT ON
THE AGENDA.

Take Double Box

CG - Double Box

Wendy Allen / Tim Brown

Knightly Newsroom

Notice how we also give the reporter something of
substance to say in the double box. We keep the
anchor's comments short, because the story is
basically over.

BUT THE PARENTS SAY
THEY WON'T LET THAT STOP
THEM.

THEY PLAN TO MAKE SURE
THEIR VOICES ARE HEARD.

LIVE IN THE NEWSROOM,
TIM BROWN, U-C-F KNIGHTLY
NEWS.

Another option is to have the reporter simply tag
out, without the double box. But you should check
with your producer and news manager before doing
that.

(WendyA / DOUBLE-BOX)

OKAY, TIM, THANKS FOR
THAT UPDATE.

Headline Sample Script

Headlines [VO]
ERT:0:29/SOT:0:00/TRT:0:29

(Knightly News)

Script A-1
Pg 1

(/ TWO-SHOT)
(HeatherF)

Notice that we give the anchors time to be recognized, and time to say something.

COMING UP NEXT ON
KNIGHTLY NEWS--
THE SPACE SHUTTLE GETS A
NEW COMMANDER.

Take VO Runs.. :30

AND HE HAS U-C-F
CONNECTIONS.
FIND OUT THAT CAN HELP
STUDENTS HERE ON CAMPUS.

Wipe VO Runs.. :30

(CamilleW)

Let's have the anchor say enough in here
so that the production crew has some time
to set up the next shot.

INVESTIGATORS ARE LOOKING
INTO WHAT CAUSED A LOCAL BAR
TO BURN TO THE GROUND.
WE'LL SHOW YOU HOW FAR
THEY ARE IN THEIR
INVESTIGATION.

(Director Note)

Take tight shot

(SamanthaR / TIGHT)

If we can end the headlines on a live person, either on set or in
the newsroom, that helps our crew. With a live person, we don't
have to worry about audio AND video.. just the camera shot and
the person talking.

THE GOLDEN KNIGHTS ARE
LOOKING FOR THEIR SECOND WIN
OF THE SEASON.
I'LL LOOK AHEAD TO THEIR
NEXT HOME GAME.
KNIGHTLY NEWS STARTS
NOW.

Printed by timbrown, on Wednesday, September 20, 2006 02:56:14 PM

Tease sample script

Tease One [VO]
ERT:0:23/SOT:0:00/TRT:0:23

(Knightly News)

Script A-16
Pg 1

(/ TWO-SHOT)

(HeatherF)

GAS PRICES ARE GOING DOWN,
IF YOU CAN BELIEVE IT.

Take VO

AFTER THE BREAK WE'LL TELL
YOU WHAT KIND OF PRICES TO
EXPECT AT THE PUMP.

AND WHERE CAN YOU FILL UP
YOUR CAR FOR CHEAP.

Wipe VO

(CamilleW)

Most of this should be self explanatory by
now. Make sure each anchor has
something substantive to read. You may
want to shorten the copy as you get more
adept.

SPEAKING OF CARS...

HAVE YOU NOTICED LOTS OF
LITTLE CRITTERS SMUSHED ON
THE FRONT OF YOUR CAR?

FIND OUT HOW THESE SWEET
LITTLE LOVE BUGS, CAN BECOME
A PESKY PROBLEM.

Appendix B: EZNews Radio Script Samples

Much of the content in radio is the same as TV, with the obvious exception of not having video in radio. However, the look of the scripts is a little bit different.

The writing continues to be for the ear. In other words, you want to make sure that you're writing for what the person is going to HEAR, rather than what s/he is going to READ. Keep the sentences short and to the point. Also look for transitions between stories.

Radio RDR/SOT

FOOTBALL ARREST [RDR]
ERT:0:29/SOT:0:12/TRT:0:41

(Radio Knightly News)

Script A-6
Pg 1

(AshleyBo)

YOU WON'T SEE U-C-F FOOTBALL CORNER BACK TRAVONTI JOHNSON ON THE FIELD FOR THE NEXT FEW GAMES.

DEPUTIES ARRESTED HIM OVER THE WEEKEND FOR DISORDERLY CONDUCT AND RESISTING ARREST AT A LOCAL DENNY'S RESTAURANT.

THE U-C-F ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT SUSPENDED JOHNSON FROM FOUR GAMES FOR VIOLATING TEAM POLICY.

HEAD COACH GEORGE O'LEARY SAID THAT HE WANTED TO TALK TO JOHNSON BEFORE DECIDING ON ANY FURTHER PUNISHMENT.

Take SOT Runs.. 0:12 .."MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE."

"Well I want to hear what he has to say before we do anything further. The main thing I want to do, outside of school, football, anything, is to make sure that this young man is in a place in his life where he can make the right choice."

(AshleyBo)

JOHNSON IS OUT OF JAIL ON A 500-DOLLAR BOND.

Notice how there is no two column format, because there really is no "production" work to be done. While we do have to worry about soundbites, those are separated by the regular commands. It pays to go ahead and put in an extra "return" before and after the soundbites.

Radio PKG Intro

I- STUDENT FINANCE [RDR]
ERT:0:18/SOT:1:30/TRT:1:48

(Radio Knightly News)

Script B-1
Pg 1

(AmandaB)

BUDGET IS NOT A WORD MOST COLLEGE STUDENTS WANT TO HEAR.

WITH THE NEW FREEDOM OF LIVING AWAY FROM HOME, NOT ALL STUDENTS WORRY ABOUT HOW THEIR DEBT WILL AFFECT THEIR FUTURE.

REPORTER, AMANDA TETLAK TELLS US WHAT STUDENTS CAN DO TO BUILD A SOLID FOUNDATION FOR LIFE AFTER COLLEGE.

Take PKG Runs.. 1:30 ..std outcue"

Notice here the same differences as in the earlier example. With no video to worry about, there is no second column. All of the information is in a full page format. We also don't have to put the CG's below the PKG command, because there are no CG's to worry about (who would see them?).

Appendix C: EZNews Tip Sheet

EZNews 101 ~ "Quick Tutor" for all EZNews Users

This document is intended for all EZNews users, but is limited primarily to basic scripting functions.

For more help and greater detail, please take advantage of EZNews "Help" - just Click 'Help' or '?'
News Directors, Producers, Editors, Sports Directors refer to the Producer's Checklists and to EZNews "Help"

Assumes the Network or EZNews Administrator has established an EZNews user Name for this user.

Assumes the Workstation on which the user is working has been "Registered" to the EZNews Server.

~ Getting Started with EZNews ~

On systems using "Universal" Computer (and Network) log-on method :

Where everyone uses a prescribed Name(s), such as ... Newsroom, or News25, etc & a 'universal' password

1. Log-On to the Computer (and Network) using the prescribed Log-On Name and Password
2. Double Click the EZNews icon (or Right/Click, then Open). EZNews screen appears.
3. When prompted to do so ... Enter you own EZNews Name and Password

On systems using an "Individualized" Computer (and Network) log-on method:

Where everyone uses their own unique Log-On Name and their own Password. (i.e. smithj /????)

1. Log-On to the Computer (and the Network) using your own Log-on Name and Password
2. Double Click the EZNews icon (or Right/Click, then Open).
3. EZNews will open ... with your own "profile", and access to your (semi-private) "Home".

~ When You're Done with EZNews ~

Closing / Logging-Out of EZNews

Make sure that you Log-Out of EZNews ..

1. Save & Close any open Scripts
2. Click X (upper right corner) on EZNews

Shutting Down / Logging-Off Computer

Check with your IT Dep't. for the exact procedure.

You do not need to Log-Off or Shut-Down the Newsroom Computers each time you use them.

~ Getting Around EZNews ~

EZNews Navigator - The window at the Upper Left. Here is where you can select the areas in which you will work. Use the "tabs" to select the Shows, Archives, or other EZNews Areas. To select a specific Show, you can click (highlight) on that Show, from the list that appears there.

EZNews Rundowns (lists) - The long window at the Bottom of the screen. This is where the rundown of the Show (or Archive) that you have selected will be displayed. Your Assignments list will also appear here.

EZNews Editor - The large area at the Upper Right. This is where you will write and edit your scripts, or your Assignments. You can display one, two, or more documents here, at the same time.

To Change your Screen View ...

To a **Full Screen Script** view - Click the **Big S** Icon (Middle of row of Icons)

To switch **back again** - Click the **Big S** again

To a **Full Screen Rundown** view - Click the **Big R** Icon (Next to the Big S)

To switch **back again** - Click the **Big R** again

For other EZNews questions ... First check-out EZNews Help - See 'Help' or '?' on EZNews menus

Appendix D: EZNews Producer Checklist

~ EZNews Producer's Checklist ~

Adherence to this procedure will provide Producers with significant efficiencies in the Preparation, the Building, and the Airing of Newscasts and similarly constructed programs. Continue to "Fine Tune" this document to reflect your own EZNews usage.

Quick List - 14 Points	See Inside for Step by Step Details
------------------------	-------------------------------------

Reminder ~ Before Erasing the previous show, make sure it was archived, and that it doesn't contain Scripts intended for today

- ☐ 1. Rescue & Store Today's Scripts ... those sent early
- ☐ 2. Erase Old Scripts & Load Template
- ☐ 3. Retrieve Stored Scripts ... those stored elsewhere
- ☐ 4. Adjust for changeable elements ... Breaks, Times
- ☐ 5. Create & Insert new Script Slugs
- ☐ 6. Move Scripts into Rundown Positions
- ☐ 7. Work on "Producer Written" elements
- ☐ 8. Review & Approve each Script
- ☐ 9. Un-Check 'D' (Dummy Time) Boxes ... an absolute!
- ☐ 10a Finalize the Rundown Order
- ☐ 10b Number the Scripts
- ☐ 11a Confirm readiness - Scripts ... incl. TZs, Close, etc
- ☐ 11b Confirm readiness - Overall Show ... incl. Spx, Wx
- ☐ 12a Print Rundowns ... repeat for each version
- ☐ 12b Print Instruction List(s) ... CG, SS, Video, Etc
- ☐ 12c Print Show Scripts
- ☐ 13 Prepare the "On-Air" Producer Computer
- ☐ 14 Prepare the Prompter Computer

~ Newscast goes to "Air" ~

- ☐ 15 Archive your Show ... immediately after the show

~ EZNews Producer's Checklist ~

Details	Show Preparation	Page 2
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Assumptions

- That each Show is used one time per week (Tuesday.6 PM for example) or less
- That individual newscast scripts will be created and written within in the Show

☐ 1. "Rescue" Today's Scripts (if any)

- a) Check within the show (both above and below the 'End of Show' line) for any scripts that may have already been created in, or sent to this show.
- b) Mark & Move them to a 'Safe' area ... File / Copy Selected to ..

☐ 2. "Erase Old Scripts & Load Template"

- a) From **File** ... select **Archive/Template**
- b) Click ... **Erase Scripts and Load Template**

☐ 3. Locate and Retrieve Stories (Existing Scripts)

To retrieve "rescued" scripts, & others intended for this newscast, which have been stored in another Show or Desk, or "aired" in another newscast.

- a) From that rundown of the Show or Desk ... **Mark** selected scripts
- b) Select **File / Copy Selected to ...**
- c) At selection Window ... **Mark the newscast**, then **OK**

☐ 4. Make adjustments for changeable show elements

- a) **Make Time adjustments**, as needed, for Breaks, Sports, Weather, etc
- b) **Move "Transient" elements in/out** of active rundown (i.e. Friday Report)

☐ 5a Create new Slugs (Scripts)

These scripts will appear at the bottom of the Rundown.

- a) Click **"s"** ... (First Icon, far left) or File / New
- b) Enter ... **Slug** name, and **Format** Description
- c) Activate the Estimated Time ... **Check Dummy Time box**
- d) **Enter Dummy Time** ... the estimated or assigned total script time
- e) To write **Now** ... Click **Open in Editor** / To write **Later** ... Click **OK**

☐ 5b Insert new Slugs (Scripts) ... at a specified point within the Rundown

These scripts will appear at the designated point within the rundown.

- a) **Mark the line**, above which you want to insert the new script
- b) Click **Insert** Icon (2nd from left) or **File / Insert** (or Shift/Insert)
- c) Enter ... **Slug** name, and **Format** Description
- d) Activate the Estimated Time ... **Check Dummy Time box**
- e) **Enter Dummy Time** ... the estimated or assigned total script time
- f) To write **Now** ... Click **Open in Editor** / To write **Later** ... Click **OK**

☐ 6. Move Scripts within the Rundown

- a) From far Left column ... Click **once to identify script** you intend to move.
- b) **Click, again and hold-down** to "Grab" the script. (a square, attached to the cursor arrow indicates that you are ready to move the script)
- c) While holding down left mouse button, **Drag the cursor** (Arrow w/square) up or down to desired location. The Red Line indicates "Insert Point".
- d) When "Red Line" is at desired point ... **Release** (Left Mouse) button.

- Work in the FAR LEFT COLUMN when addressing scripts from the Rundown -

~ EZNews Producer's Checklist ~

Details	Show Preparation	Page 3
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- ☐ **7. Work on "Producer Written" elements (Teases, Leads, Wire derived, etc)**
On-going process until all of these scripts are completed and approved.

- ☐ **8. Review and Approve each script**
On-going process until all scripts are in, reviewed, and approved
 - a) **Open, Review, Clean-Up, & Approve - Editorially**
(Accuracy, Clarity, Completeness)
 - b) **Open, Review, Clean-Up, & Approve - Structurally**
(Timing, Completeness, Formatting, Instruction Check, CGs, etc)

- ☐ **9. Indicate Approval of Scripts & Activate true Script/Newscast timing**
THIS IS A REQUIRED STEP - Show will not time without its completion.
On-going process until all scripts are in, reviewed, and approved
 - a) Un-Check all 'D' column boxes ... from Rundown as scripts are approved
 - 1. Visually indicates which Scripts are Show Ready (No check in 'D' Box)
 - 2. Causes times to be derived from actual script elements, not estimates
 - 3. Required for Automated "On-Air" Timing and Show Control

- ☐ **10 Finalize the Rundown Order / Number the Scripts**
 - a) Move all scripts into final order (see item 5)
 - b) Number the order ... **Click the "#" Icon**
Can be re-done, as needed (and as appropriate to do so)

- ☐ **11 Confirm readiness of Scripts/Newscast**
 - a) Confirm that **ALL 'D'** (Dummy Time) boxes are **UN-CHECKED**
 - b) Check that all **script times** (ERT, SOT, Total) "make sense"
 - c) Check that all **template item times** (ERT, SOT, Total) make "sense"
 - d) Check that all **show times** (Fill Time, Projected Hit, etc) "make sense".
 - e) Fine-tune elements so that **"Fill Time" equals 0:00** (or very close)

- ☐ **12a Print Rundowns** (repeat for other versions, such as Cam Op, Director, etc)
 - a) **Clear Editor Screen** of any Scripts
 - b) File / Print / 'Print Rundown as ...'
 - c) Select desired Format ... Click **OK**
 - d) Enter desired number of copies ... Click **OK**

- ☐ **12b Print CG List** (and SS, Vid, Etc)
 - a) **File / Print / Print Instructions**
 - b) **Select desired Instruction** ... Click **OK**
 - c) Enter desired **number of copies** ... Click **OK**

- ☐ **12c Print Show Scripts**
 - a) **Mark Scripts individually** or **Mark ALL Scripts** :
 - 1. **Click (highlight) FIRST Script**
 - 2. **Shift / Click LAST script**
 - b) **File / Print / 'Selected Scripts'**
 - c) Select **'Standard'**
 - d) **Enter number of copies as 1** ... Click **OK**
 - e) **Repeat b., c., e. for each set** of show scripts.

- Work in the FAR LEFT COLUMN when addressing scripts from the Rundown -

~ EZNews Producer's Checklist ~

Details

Show Preparation

Page 4

Assumptions

- That, the Control Room Producer Computer & Prompter Computer are dedicated.
- That they, and all other key Computers, are "Time Synced" to the File Server.
- That the Prompter Computer is 'Network Prompter' designated (Utilities/Admin).

❑ **13 Prepare "On-Air" Producer Computer**

Produces visual queues ... Script being Prompted, extent Light/Heavy, etc.

- a) At "On-Air" Producer's computer ... **Call up correct newscast.**
- b) **Change rundown display to ... "Control Room" view**
 1. Right click Rundown (Window will appear)
 2. Click "Change Rundown Display"
 3. Browse to "Control Room" ... Click it.
- c) (If needed) Clear previous "Actual Hit Times"
 1. Right click Rundown (Window will appear)
 2. Click "Clear Actual Hit Times".
- d) (If needed) Adjust Start/Length/End Times
 1. Right click Rundown (Window will appear)
 2. Click "Change Show Times"

* Can be done after actual start.
- e. Changes made from the Control room PC will be reflected on Prompter.

❑ **14 Prepare and Run Prompter**

At designated Prompter Computer ... **Call up correct newscast.**

- a) **Mark 1st Script** (Prompter will always start at Highlighted Script)
- b) Click **"Prompt Show"** icon (little camera w/sq. rundown page under it)
- c) To control speed of scrolling text (using a Wheel Mouse is Preferred)
 - Start/Stop = Left Click
 - Reverse = (While scrolling) Hold Right Click down
 - Control Speed =
 - Wheel ... roll wheel forward (faster) or Backward (Slower)
 - Mouse/Trackball ... again, forward (Faster) or Back (Slower) ...
- d) To **Quit** or **ESCape** Prompter = Press **Q** or **ESC**
- e) To start prompting at a particular script ... mark that script, then prompt.

~ Newscast goes to "Air" ~

❑ **15 Archive your Show ... immediately after the show**

Critical ... Archive the Show immediately following newscast. The "Show Date" in the Archive is determined by the date it was actually Archived or you can select a date.

- a) **Clear the Editor Window** (No scripts Open)
- b) From **File** ... click **"Archive / Template"**
- c) Select most appropriate, from ...
 - **Archive Only** ... Archives the Newscast, but has no other impact.
 - or**
 - **Archive, Erase Scripts, Load Template** ... it does all of those functions.

- Work in the FAR LEFT COLUMN when addressing scripts from the Rundown -

Appendix E: RTDNA Code of Ethics:

Ethics

Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

For the Code of Ethics en español, [click here](#).

PREAMBLE

Professional electronic journalists should operate as trustees of the public, seek the truth, report it fairly and with integrity and independence, and stand accountable for their actions.

PUBLIC TRUST: Professional electronic journalists should recognize that their first obligation is to the public.

Professional electronic journalists should:

- * Understand that any commitment other than service to the public undermines trust and credibility.
- * Recognize that service in the public interest creates an obligation to reflect the diversity of the community and guard against oversimplification of issues or events.
- * Provide a full range of information to enable the public to make enlightened decisions.
- * Fight to ensure that the public's business is conducted in public.

TRUTH: Professional electronic journalists should pursue truth aggressively and present the news accurately, in context, and as completely as possible.

Professional electronic journalists should:

- * Continuously seek the truth.
- * Resist distortions that obscure the importance of events.
- * Clearly disclose the origin of information and label all material provided by outsiders.

Professional electronic journalists should not:

- * Report anything known to be false.
- * Manipulate images or sounds in any way that is misleading.
- * Plagiarize.
- * Present images or sounds that are reenacted without informing the public.

FAIRNESS: Professional electronic journalists should present the news fairly and impartially, placing primary value on significance and relevance.

Professional electronic journalists should:

- * Treat all subjects of news coverage with respect and dignity, showing particular compassion to victims of crime or tragedy.
- * Exercise special care when children are involved in a story and give children greater privacy protection than adults.
- * Seek to understand the diversity of their community and inform the public without bias or stereotype.
- * Present a diversity of expressions, opinions, and ideas in context.
- * Present analytical reporting based on professional perspective, not personal bias.
- * Respect the right to a fair trial.

INTEGRITY: Professional electronic journalists should present the news with integrity and decency, avoiding real or perceived conflicts of interest, and respect the dignity and intelligence of the audience as well as the subjects of news.

Professional electronic journalists should:

- * Identify sources whenever possible. Confidential sources should be used only when it is clearly in the public interest to gather or convey important information or when a person providing information might be harmed. Journalists should keep all commitments to protect a confidential source.
- * Clearly label opinion and commentary.
- * Guard against extended coverage of events or individuals that fails to significantly advance a story, place the event in context, or add to the public knowledge.
- * Refrain from contacting participants in violent situations while the situation is in progress.
- * Use technological tools with skill and thoughtfulness, avoiding techniques that skew facts, distort reality, or sensationalize events.
- * Use surreptitious newsgathering techniques, including hidden cameras or microphones, only if there is no other way to obtain stories of significant public importance and only if the technique is explained to the audience.
- * Disseminate the private transmissions of other news organizations only with permission.

Professional electronic journalists should not:

- * Pay news sources who have a vested interest in a story.
- * Accept gifts, favors, or compensation from those who might seek to influence coverage.
- * Engage in activities that may compromise their integrity or independence.

INDEPENDENCE: Professional electronic journalists should defend the independence of all journalists from those seeking influence or control over news content.

Professional electronic journalists should:

- * Gather and report news without fear or favor, and vigorously resist undue influence from any outside forces, including advertisers, sources, story subjects, powerful individuals, and special interest groups.
- * Resist those who would seek to buy or politically influence news content or who would seek to intimidate those who gather and disseminate the news.
- * Determine news content solely through editorial judgment and not as the result of outside influence.
- * Resist any self-interest or peer pressure that might erode journalistic duty and service to the public.
- * Recognize that sponsorship of the news will not be used in any way to determine, restrict, or manipulate content.
- * Refuse to allow the interests of ownership or management to influence news judgment and content inappropriately.
- * Defend the rights of the free press for all journalists, recognizing that any professional or government licensing of journalists is a violation of that freedom.

ACCOUNTABILITY: Professional electronic journalists should recognize that they are accountable for their actions to the public, the profession, and themselves.

Professional electronic journalists should:

- * Actively encourage adherence to these standards by all journalists and their employers.
- * Respond to public concerns. Investigate complaints and correct errors promptly and with as much prominence as the original report.
- * Explain journalistic processes to the public, especially when practices spark questions or controversy.
- * Recognize that professional electronic journalists are duty-bound to conduct themselves ethically.
- * Refrain from ordering or encouraging courses of action that would force employees to commit an unethical act.

- * Carefully listen to employees who raise ethical objections and create environments in which such objections and discussions are encouraged.
- * Seek support for and provide opportunities to train employees in ethical decision-making.

In meeting its responsibility to the profession of electronic journalism, RTDNA has created this code to identify important issues, to serve as a guide for its members, to facilitate self-scrutiny, and to shape future debate.

Adopted at RTDNA2000 in Minneapolis September 14, 2000.



[To order a poster-size copy of the RTDNA Code of Ethics*](#)

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Appendix F: RTDNA Social Media Guidelines

Ethics

Social Media and Blogging Guidelines

Social media and blogs are important elements of journalism. They narrow the distance between journalists and the public. They encourage lively, immediate and spirited discussion. They can be vital news-gathering and news-delivery tools. As a journalist you should uphold the same professional and ethical standards of fairness, accuracy, truthfulness, transparency and independence when using social media as you do on air and on all digital news platforms.

Truth and Fairness

- Social media comments and postings should meet the same standards of fairness, accuracy and attribution that you apply to your on-air or digital platforms.

- Information gleaned online should be confirmed just as you must confirm scanner traffic or phone tips before reporting them. If you cannot independently confirm critical information, reveal your sources; tell the public how you know what you know and what you cannot confirm. Don't stop there. Keep seeking confirmation. This guideline is the same for covering breaking news on station websites as on the air. You should not leave the public "hanging." Lead the public to completeness and understanding.

- Twitter's character limits and immediacy are not excuses for inaccuracy and unfairness.

- Remember that social media postings live on as online archives. Correct and clarify mistakes, whether they are factual mistakes or mistakes of omission.

•When using content from blogs or social media, ask critical questions such as:

- What is the source of the video or photograph? Who wrote the comment and what was the motivation for posting it.

- Does the source have the legal right to the material posted? Did that person take the photograph or capture the video?

- Has the photograph or video been manipulated? Have we checked to see if the metadata attached to the image reveals that it has been altered?

- Social networks typically offer a "privacy" setting, so users can choose not to have their photographs or thoughts in front of the uninvited public. Capturing material from a public Facebook site is different from prying behind a password-protected wall posing as a friend. When considering whether to access "private" content, journalists should apply the same RTDNA guidelines recommended for undercover journalism. Ask:

- Does the poster have a 'reasonable expectation' of privacy?

- Is this a story of great significance?

- Is there any other way to get the information?

- Are you willing to disclose your methods and reasoning?

- What are your journalistic motivations?

For Discussion in your Newsroom:

1. When an Army psychiatrist killed 13 people at Fort Hood, Twitter messages, supposedly from "inside the post" reported gunfire continued for a half hour and that there were multiple shooters. Journalists passed along the information naming Twitter writers as the sources. The information proved to be false and needed to be corrected. If

one or multiple shooters had been at large, withholding that information could have caused some people to be in harm's way. The nature of live, breaking news frequently leads to reports of rumor, hearsay and other inaccurate information. Journalists must source information, correct mistakes quickly and prominently and remind the public that the information is fluid and could be unreliable.

Questions for the Newsroom:

-What protocols does your newsroom have to correct mistakes on social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook?

-Does your newsroom have a process for copyediting and oversight of the content posted on social media sites? What decision-making process do you go through before you post?

-What protocols do you have for checking the truthfulness of photographs or video that you find on Facebook, YouTube or photo-sharing sites? Have you contacted the photographer? Can you see the unedited video or raw photograph file? Does the image or video make sense when compared to the facts of the story?

-Who in the newsroom is charged with confirming information gleaned from social media sites?

Accountability and Transparency

- You should not write anonymously or use an avatar or username that cloaks your real identity on newsroom or personal websites. You are responsible for everything you say. Commenting or blogging anonymously compromises this core principle.
- Be especially careful when you are writing, Tweeting or blogging about a topic that you or your newsroom covers. Editorializing about a topic or person can reveal your personal feelings. Biased comments could be used in a court of law to demonstrate a predisposition, or even malicious intent, in a libel action against the news organization, even for an unrelated story.
- Just as you keep distance between your station's advertising and journalism divisions, you should not use social media to promote business or personal interests without disclosing that relationship to the public. Sponsored links should be clearly labeled, not cloaked as journalistic content.

For Discussion in your Newsroom:

1. Your consumer reporter at a major electronics show wants to give a glowing blog review of a new digital camera. When the company makes the splashy announcement, the reporter Tweets the news. The message virals fast and wide. Your station will be running ads for the camera as part of the company's national advertising campaign. How will you tell the public that you have a business relationship with the camera company?

2. Your political reporter has been covering the challenger in the mayor's race. On his personal Facebook page, your reporter says, "I am covering another candidate who is dumber than dirt." The candidate's press secretary calls to demand that the political reporter be "taken off the campaign." Your reporter's defense: "What I say on my own time on my own website is my business. Plus I didn't name names."

How will you respond? What should you tell the public about the complaint and your decision?

Image and Reputation

- Remember that what's posted online is open to the public (even if you consider it to be private). Personal and professional lives merge online. Newsroom employees should recognize that even though their comments may seem to be in their "private space," their words become direct extensions of their news organizations. Search engines and social mapping sites can locate their posts and link the writers' names to their employers.
- There are journalistic reasons to connect with people online, even if you cover them, but consider whom you "friend" on sites like Facebook or "follow" on Twitter. You may believe that online "friends" are different from other friends in your life, but the public may not always see it that way. For example, be prepared to publicly explain why you show up as a "friend" on a politician's website. Inspect your "friends" list regularly to look for conflicts with those

who become newsmakers.

- Be especially careful when registering for social network sites. Pay attention to how the public may interpret Facebook information that describes your relationship status, age, sexual preference and political or religious views. These descriptors can hold loaded meanings and affect viewer perception.
- Keep in mind that when you join an online group, the public may perceive that you support that group. Be prepared to justify your membership.
- Avoid posting photos or any other content on any website, blog, social network or video/photo sharing website that might embarrass you or undermine your journalistic credibility. Keep this in mind, even if you are posting on what you believe to be a "private" or password-protected site. Consider this when allowing others to take pictures of you at social gatherings. When you work for a journalism organization, you represent that organization on and off the clock. The same standards apply for journalists who work on air or off air.
- Bloggers and journalists who use social media often engage readers in a lively give-and-take of ideas. Never insult or disparage readers. Try to create a respectful, informed dialogue while avoiding personal attacks.

For Discussion in your Newsroom:

1. Edgy Facebook and Twitter postings create more traffic, so you urge your newsroom to get online and be provocative to get more attention. How will you respond when your anchor poses holding a half-empty martini glass on her Facebook site? How will you respond if your reporter's Facebook profile picture shows a bong in the background? What would your response be if a producer, who identifies herself as "conservative" on her Facebook page, Tweets her opinions during a political rally?

2. A news manager "friends" a neighbor he meets at a block party. A year later the neighbor decides to run for mayor. The news manager gets an indignant call from the incumbent mayor's press secretary suggesting the station coverage will be biased, since your news manager supports the challenger. Does the news manager have to "unfriend" his neighbor to preserve the appearance of fairness? Could the manager make things right if he "friended" the mayor, too?

RTDNF provides workshops and programs on ethics, leadership and decision-making skills and a number of other guidelines for specific journalistic challenges. In addition, RTDNA staff members and board members are always available to provide assistance upon request.

These guidelines were developed by the RTDNA Ethics Committee and Al Tompkins, group leader for broadcasting and online, The Poynter Institute.

The guidelines were created though RTDNF's Journalism Ethics Project sponsored by a generous grant from the Ethics and Excellence in Journalism.

TAGS: Ethics, Social Media, Twitter, Facebook, Coverage Guidelines, Blog

ARTICLE TOOLS:  Print Story  Email Story  RSS Feed

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Appendix G – Inside the studio



This is a standard “two anchor” shot. As you can see, Erica (on the right) is finishing up her read in video (she’s talking, but not on camera) and Arthur (on the left) is looking at his camera, getting ready for his story.

On the right is the view from the anchor desk, and you see the three cameras as you’re looking out from the set. We **CROSS SHOOT** our anchors, which means that if you are on the right side of the desk, the camera on the **LEFT** is your primary tight shot. The Camera in the middle is your two shot, and the camera to your right is the primary camera for your co-anchor, who sits to your left. It’s important that you get a sense of where you are on the set as well as where you are in the studio so that you can feel the **MOST** comfortable.



Here are Matt (left) and Nic (right) getting ready for a show. This may be the most important part of the entire newscast for an anchor – reading through your scripts before the show.... **SEVERAL** times before the show. The more you know about the newscast and how it flows, as well as where the stories are in the rundown and how you need to read through them. If you haven’t done this at least five times before the show begins, then you haven’t prepared enough. Remember: the teleprompter is a **GUIDE** to delivering your scripts. You should know your stories well enough that the prompter does just that – prompt.

Here Bryan (left), the producer, is talking with his anchor team before the show. He's going over some last minute changes and making them aware of some potential issues that may come up. It's extremely important that the producer communicate throughout the day and the newscast. Having a quick conversation just to answer questions can save you in the middle of a show.



This is the view from behind the producer station in the control room. As you can see, there are a lot of sources that the producer and the production crew have to pay attention to. That's why we say "everyone has to be on the same page – literally." You want your scripts to reflect what's going to happen and when.

If you look to the right, you'll notice that we have a little bit tighter shot of what the inputs look like. On the right is the "program" monitor, which shows us what's on the air NOW. On the left is "preview" which shows us what's coming on the air NEXT. The director and technical director know this because of what's laid out in the rundown. If the rundown says "weather" and the scripts say "sports is next," clearly we have a problem. Producers and directors meet before every show to walk through the newscast and find any little problem that may come up.



On the far right, you see the graphics that will come up later in the newscast, and on the very top you see the inputs from the three cameras. Notice the blank blue screen in the top middle – that's what everyone in the studio sees. In the preview monitor is the "mix effect" of the camera, the blue wall and the "chroma key" graphic. Little tip – when doing weather, don't wear blue.