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AUDIENCE-CENTRIC MEDIA

REVIEW

1. What is an audience-centric approach to media? How is it similar to and different from previous approaches media outlets took with regard to publishing content?
2. What are three types of information media professionals need to gather to create audience segmentation? Define and differentiate among these three forms of information.
3. What is the difference between a “platform” and an “outlet”?
4. What does it mean to “personify” an audience? How does it work and how does it benefit you as a media writer?
5. What do the letters in the acronym “FOCII” stand for, and what does “FOCII” mean overall as a concept?

6. What are the two key questions the book tells you to ask of yourself to ensure you are approaching your work in an audience-centric way?

WRITING EXERCISES

1. Choose a media outlet you rely on for information and select five pieces of content (stories, blog posts, etc.) that appeal to you. Then, apply the FOCII elements to them. Which interest elements are most prevalent? Which ones are missing or rarely used? Write a short essay that outlines what made these pieces appeal to you and the degree to which the interest elements played a role in your selections. Also, outline what makes these pieces similar and what makes them different in terms of what they tell you and why you care about them.
2. Read each of the following sentences below and then explain which interest elements most directly apply to it and why:
 - President Donald Trump signed an agreement with Russia that will leave both countries with no nuclear weapons by 2040.
 - The Board of Trustees at your school announced last week that it will increase tuition by 10 percent next year, despite your school president's specific request to cut tuition costs.
 - Officials at your university have announced that a rare form of bacterial meningitis has struck four students in the largest residence hall on your campus.
 - The governor of your state has just been impeached because of an arcane provision in the state's constitution that requires all politicians to weigh less than 300 pounds.
3. Select one source of information you found to be dominating your media diet and examine it for the three things the book says that journalists "owe" their audience: accuracy, value and fairness/objectivity. How well do you think this source does in meeting those standards? In what areas does the source excel, and where could it do a better job for its readers or viewers?

4. Pick a publication that has the potential to see an audience change over time, such as a teen magazine or a parenting publication. Find one of the oldest issues of that publication easily available to you, either online or in your library's archives, as well as the most recent issue. Examine the publication for things that remain constant over time, in terms of content, images, themes and so forth. Also, assess what things have changed over the time span the two issues cover. Write a short analytical essay that explains the similarities and differences as well as why you think the publication has remained the same and yet changed over time.

5. Find a press release on a topic associated with your school. It can be about anything, from a budget crisis to an upcoming event. Now, find a news report on that same topic. It can be from the student newspaper, a city newspaper, a local blog, a television report or any other "news-centric" media outlet. In a short essay, outline the key elements featured in the release and the news report. Then compare and contrast the two pieces in terms of the interest elements they feature and the key needs listed in the chapter. Finally, explain which piece was more valuable to you as a reader and why.

6. Review a week's worth of content from a local media outlet (newspaper, website, TV station, etc.), and keep track of the topics they cover and which kinds of news get the most attention. Review your notes and write a short paper that explains your findings and whether you think the coverage reflects the interests of the audience of the media outlet.

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