

SEVEN STEPS TO SUCCESS

BUILDING A DIGITAL NEWSROOM

News Stream® Services

HARNESSING OWNED SPACES BUILDING A NEWSROOM

GOING DIRECT

Moving Beyond Brochure-ware and Pressrooms

The best websites have evolved over the past decade from static brochure-ware to dynamic, immersive experiences that engage the audience and tell stories.

Most companies and organizations have been slow to adapt their digital strategies to account for the changing expectations of audiences and the growth of new influencers outside of traditional media. Many sites remain static, with the dynamic content that audiences now expect pushed to separate microsites, blogs or off-property social media outlets. And while some sites now have newsrooms, often the newsrooms are merely lists of press releases aimed at traditional media outlets.

The growth of search engines as discovery tools for consumers, and social media as inexpensive distribution tools, has created an opportunity to build dynamic sites that engage multiple audiences and draw them deeper into an organization's brand. Although organizations have long been publishers of content — ranging from marketing and advertising to public relations materials — now they can become credible media outlets that distribute their stories and expertise across the digital realm.

Whether through social media, search or referrals from influentials' links, investors, partners, customers and potential customers are seeking out and discovering news and information that organizations publish across multiple properties. To build deeper engagement and satisfaction, brands need engaging content distributed through a state-of-the-art platform.

A STORYTELLING PLATFORM

These recommendations are designed to help organizations build a dynamic digital newsroom that serves as a storytelling platform. By harnessing current technology and building clear processes and templates, a digital newsroom can be simple and speedy to update. The content can extend across external platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook and future popular social media properties. The newsroom platform also can be used to deliver content on current mobile devices and new devices that may evolve in the near future.

SEVEN STEPS BUILDING A NEWSROOM

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These steps aim to harness resources to build a content engine and platform that can produce and distribute compelling real-time news and information that tells an organization's story. That content will lead audiences to engage with the brand and, ultimately, drive action, whether through purchases or participation.

Although existing content can be leveraged by the engine, fueling it often means that priorities and resources must be shifted from traditional communication methods.

These steps can be taken in order or reprioritized, based on existing circumstances.

1. [Unify the Platform](#)
2. [Unify the Feeds](#)
3. [Unify the Resources](#)
4. [Unify the Experience](#)
5. [Curate and Amplify Existing Content](#)
6. [Diversify Content With Storytelling Packages and Templates](#)
7. [Create a Nimble Mindset](#)

SEVEN STEPS BUILDING A NEWSROOM

UNIFY THE PLATFORM

The problem: Companies and organizations — particularly large ones — frequently employ multiple digital platforms, as well as several blogging or community platforms, housing separate databases of content. Content often has to be double-published, which leads to double the work, greater chance for error and a poor user experience.

The solution: The latest enterprise content management system (CMS) solutions reduce the effort needed to publish content and allow for additional outputs, such as social media, email newsletters and mobile applications. Use of a CMS also allows content to be easily aggregated and cross-linked through simple tagging methods. For smaller organizations, blogging platforms can be utilized as content management systems.

The payoff: Content from different parts of the organization can be centrally surfaced without double-publishing, making it easier to spotlight the most important news — no matter where it originates.

UNIFY THE FEEDS

The problem: Disparate platforms keep content in silos, making it harder to push out the most compelling stories in a timely way. Communications team members aren't able to keep track of the most interesting or compelling content that could be used to build a cohesive narrative.

The solution: Build integrated, real-time feeds of all PR, marketing, advertising, social media and other outreach content being created by, for and about your organization. In most cases, these feeds already exist, and are publicly available, but are not tied together. A unified feed would work like a wire service — exclusively about your company — that is easy to keep track of and assess.

The payoff: The feeds allow for an editor or communications expert to make intelligent and efficient decisions on programming the newsroom. In addition, the feeds would help identify opportunities to create new content to co-opt and amplify a trending topic or address an issue.

SEVEN STEPS BUILDING A NEWSROOM

UNIFY THE RESOURCES

The problem: Often, company and organization content creation and newsrooms are managed by a number of people for whom the work is just one of many competing priorities, rather than by a dedicated core team.

The solution: Use the unified platform and real-time feeds (see previous two recommendations) to allow a small, dedicated staff to manage and update a newsroom and create a more cohesive story and more cohesive messaging for the organization. In addition, create a cross-organization editorial council for oversight and to provide input on content, design and programming.

The payoff: Clarified and centralized ownership makes it easier for a small team to nimbly manage news and messaging. The editorial council ensures all parts of the organization have a stake in the newsroom.

UNIFY THE EXPERIENCE

The problem: Disparate digital properties and newsrooms have significantly different appearances and navigational structures, making it difficult for audiences to recognize them as elements of a unified communications platform.

The solution: Update site design elements to improve visual consistency and navigation across the different properties.

The payoff: A smart design tells a compelling story to influence audiences and influencers across business or organizational boundaries. A single design also can create an integrated experience across different parts of the organization without requiring central coordination of all content.

DIVERSIFY CONTENT WITH STORYTELLING PACKAGES AND TEMPLATES

The problem: Press releases focus on a narrow audience. New media influentials and consumers expect a variety of kinds of content when they visit online properties through search or social media. These new types of content can be time-consuming and challenging to create. Also, they need to be credible and authentic in a different way than a press release.

The solution: Establish a diverse, but limited, set of dynamic storytelling packages and templates to guide content creators in producing compelling stories and news.

The payoff: Communications team members can save time in story generation and refinement and can expand the range of content types for a better user experience. Templates and packages also enable content creators from other parts of the organization to submit content that will require minimal revision to meet quality standards.

SEVEN STEPS BUILDING A NEWSROOM

CURATE AND AMPLIFY EXISTING CONTENT

The problem: Organizations' newsrooms often do not reflect the large number of people, including members of the media, customers and partners, who are talking about a company every day. Also, the content being posted by companies' own blogs, communities and other marketing platforms often is not effectively captured.

The solution: Harness this internal and external content and showcase it in your newsroom.

The payoff: Third-party voices add credibility to your messaging and narrative. Tracking and curating external content makes it easier to join the conversation with an already-engaged public. Showcasing additional content on the main newsroom page builds a more dynamic space without requiring the communications team to create new content from scratch. Connecting newsroom content pieces to related case studies or community posts also allows visitors to dive deeper into your organization's trove of information.

CREATE A NIMBLE MINDSET

The problem: Online communication and content are going to continue to evolve at a rapid pace, meaning that rigid platform constraints and processes will fail to keep up. Typically, a company's news and community efforts sprout up organically, created to solve specific business problems by various parts of the organization. These diverse communications properties create noise that dilutes efforts to build an overall brand narrative.

The solution: Build a platform, processes and templates to ensure that new mediums and frameworks can easily be incorporated while ensuring a cohesive narrative.

The payoff: Your organization can communicate more clearly and adapt quickly to new trends without high costs or effort. You can build an integrated narrative without actually integrating your businesses.

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