

1

Best Practices

DO YOU KNOW WHO'S BEHIND THE NEWS?

If a journalist's organization has rules they must follow to make sure their reporting is independent, accurate and honest, then their news will be more trustworthy.

- Does the site use guidelines to protect honest and independent reporting?
- What is the site's mission and priorities?
- Who funds them?

2

Journalist Expertise

WHO MADE THIS?

We are rarely there to see events in the news for ourselves, so we rely on the journalist. They should follow strict standards for gathering solid evidence and multiple perspectives.

- Are the journalist(s) credentials easily available?
- Do they have a good professional reputation as a journalist?
- Are they reporting on a topic or community they know well?

3

Labels

NEWS? OPINION? OR WHAT?

It's important to know whether your news is impartial or deliberately biased. Stories should be clearly labeled if they are designed to persuade us to agree. If it's journalism, then it's meant to help us develop our own opinions.

- Is the story impartial or does it have a clear opinion?
- Is it highly partisan, sponsored or advertising something?
- Is the purpose clearly shown?

4

References

WHAT'S THEIR SOURCE?

When a journalist is developing a news story, they may use information from eye witnesses, documents and other places – called "sources." When a journalist shows their sources, we can check their reliability for ourselves.

- For investigative, in-depth or controversial stories, does the journalist provide sources for each claim?
- Do they give details so we can check the sources ourselves?
- Do other sources back up what is being said?

5

Diversity

HOW WAS IT BUILT?

If we know why a journalist chose a particular story and how they reported it, it's easier to interpret it. A journalist's methods help us know how fast-moving, well-researched or impartial the story may be.

- How much reporting was done?
- What methods were used?
- Who else was involved in the process?

6

Locally Sourced

DO THEY KNOW YOU? YOUR COMMUNITY?

If a journalist knows and lives in the community, they can explain an event or issue more sensitively and accurately. If not, they can improve their reporting by going there and speaking to others who have local and community knowledge.

- Was the reporting done with deep knowledge about the local situation or community?
- Was the journalist on the scene?
- Did the journalist make an effort to listen to members of the community?

7

Diverse Voices

WHO'S IN THE NEWS? WHO'S MISSING?

If certain voices or experiences are missing from the news, we don't get the full picture. Look for voices less commonly heard in society, often because of race, class, generation, gender, sexual orientation, ideology or the region they live in.

- Does the newsroom commit to bringing in diverse perspectives?
- Is there evidence that the journalist pays attention to diversity?
- Are some communities included only in stereotypical ways, or completely missing?

8

Actionable Feedback

DOES THIS NEWS SITE LISTEN TO ME?

By inviting and listening to public feedback, journalists can make sure their work is accurate and complete. The public also might help them find important news they had overlooked.

- Does the news site invite the public to participate?
- Do they ask for feedback?
- Do they correct errors quickly, clearly and prominently?