Community Portrait Worksheet

This worksheet is designed to help you create and continually refine a portrait of the community with whom you're engaging. Through this recurring process you'll develop a clearer and clearer idea about which people, organizations, places and media platforms to reach out to.

This visioning work will be strengthened if participants come from various departments, including news, talk show, membership, underwriting and if participants are as diverse in terms of gender, age, race, class etc. as possible.

The first time you engage in this exercise you likely will be working from your own assumptions. Consequently, it's essential that you return to this worksheet after each series of engagement to correct your assumptions and reflect on what new insights you have gained through your community engagement work.

Over the long term, this identified community will become part of what you understand to be your core audience. Your reporting will be transformed from being about this community to being for this community.

Before you begin this worksheet:
- You should have completed an assessment of your own biases.
    - <u>Understand your own perspective</u> (from Poynter).
    - Make an honest inventory of your own privileges using our <u>Bias Check</u> resources.

- You should have Identified whom you're currently serving.
    - Perform a <u>source diversity audit</u>.
    - Who is your current audience and membership?
        - Where do they live? What are their demographics?
    - What are the focus areas of your current news and culture coverage?

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Community Portrait Worksheet (continued)

Step 1: Identify gaps: Who isn't being served?
- Being conscious of your biases and having a clearer picture of what communities you're already serving allows you to think of the communities that aren't yet being served.
- As you develop a consensus around what community you'd like to serve, refine who these people are. The more specific the better. Don't just say you want to engage "people who are Latino." Rather: "affluent, young men who identify as Latino, live in _____ neighborhood and occasionally attend religious services." The more precise you are, the more it will help you with the exercise to follow.

Write your final sentence describing, as precisely as possible, who the people are who make up this community:

Step 2: Build a persona
- Create a persona of a person from this community. In the very first iteration of this exercise, accept and acknowledge your bias and assumptions and accept that this is the beginning of a process to correct those biases and assumptions. You must start somewhere.

Persona/audience Name: (Example: Sofia Ramon, John Smith, Jane Q. Public)

Community Portrait Worksheet (continued)

Daily habits: Describe habits, walk through a typical day from their perspective. Example: "Joe gets up at 5 a.m. most mornings, checks Facebook as he makes coffee and breakfast for his two kids..." Also consider noting other things that distinguish this person. Where do they work? Do they travel?

News preferences: Describe assumed news behaviors: e.g., reads headlines, listens/reads before work, listens to podcasts, etc. Be sure to consider when and where they do this consumption, refer back to the daily habits box for ideas. Once you've completed the list, circle 1 to 3 of what you currently believe to be the most frequently used.

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Community Portrait Worksheet (continued)

Whom do they trust: List who and/or what you believe are the trusted sources of information for this person. This could be their spouse, local TV news, TikTok, etc. Again, refer back to their daily habits for ideas) Once you've completed the list, circle 1 to 3 of the people/sources you currently believe to be this person's most trusted source for information.

Physical spaces: List the spaces you believe this type of person visits on a regular basis. Refer back to their daily habits for ideas. Once you've completed the list, circle 1 to 3 of the places you currently believe to be this person's most frequently visited physical space/s.

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You've just identified 3 to 9 different places for engagement as well as individuals and/or organizations that you currently believe are sources of trusted information and news.

If this is your first time going through this exercise these are perfect places to start building partnerships, relationships with community influencers, hosting and promoting events, listening sessions, and finding sources. For example: if the young, professional Latino man you want to reach shops at a certain grocery store, goes to a certain church or is on Instagram, you want to meet him where he's at. Could you partner with his church or grocery store for an event? Would your Instagram stories appeal to him?

When you return to this exercise you should have either re-affirmed some of your previous assumptions or found new or additional opportunities for more impactful and authentic engagement with this community.

Step 3: Do the engagement
- In the process of doing your engagement remember to continually ask about the daily habits of
- the individuals in this community. Don't forget people and communities continually change; just
- because they use WhatsApp today doesn't mean they will later, for instance.

Step 4: Return to this exercise
- Remember to continually refer back to this exercise and do it over as you discover new information-
- tion. This will help you identify you and your teams' biases and help identify when you're discover-
- ing something that complicates those assumptions. These are areas ripe for good stories.