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COMMUNICATING WITHOUT WORDS

OVERVIEW

1. Why do we communicate to alumni?
2. Is print dead?
3. Case studies
4. Content types
5. Next steps and questions

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

go.ncsu.edu/no-words

ALUMNI COMMUNICATIONS

- ▶ Alumni magazines main form of communication with alma mater
- ▶ Research has shown that individuals stop giving to charities when they are not kept informed of an organization's work
- ▶ "I'm not sure my contribution makes a difference"
- ▶ Regular contact with alumni results in larger donations than does one-time campaigns
- ▶ Alumni magazines and email newsletters most effective

WHAT DO YOU DO?

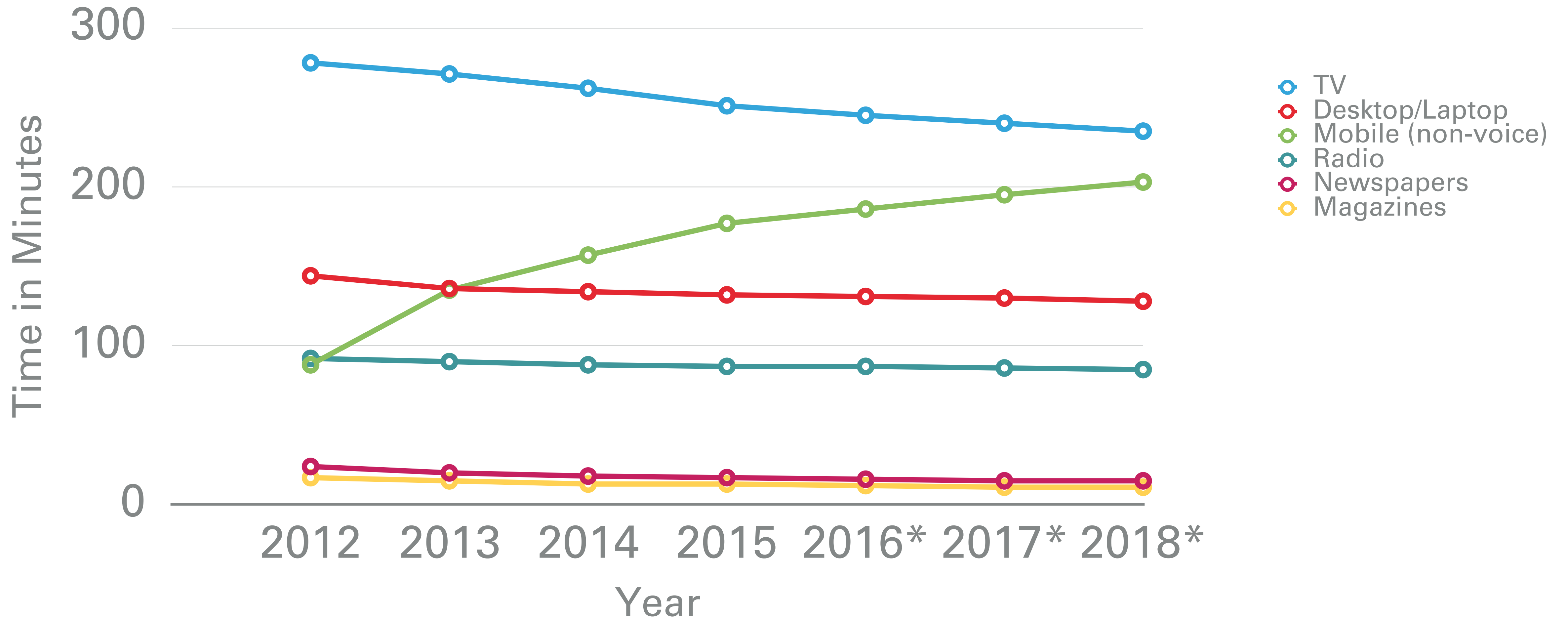
- ▶ Marketing and Communications
- ▶ Alumni Relations
- ▶ Annual Giving and Major Gifts
- ▶ Advancement Services
- ▶ I don't fit into any of those!

DIGITAL VS. PRINT

- ▶ All things being equal, the literature today indicates that magazines providing entertainment value are welcomed in either print or digital format
- ▶ Potential readers are already spending a large portion of their media consumption time online, and institutions can take advantage of that today
- ▶ Switching to digital-only communications doesn't always make sense today, but it's vitally important to have a digital presence
- ▶ Digital and print content should not correlate one-to-one
- ▶ Users expect different experiences depending upon medium

DIGITAL VS. PRINT

AVERAGE DAILY MEDIA USE IN THE U.S.
2012-2018



WHAT MAKES A MAGAZINE?

- ▶ “Lean back” experience
- ▶ Sense of completion due to a beginning and an end
- ▶ Covers a niche topic
- ▶ Each issue may have a curated set of stories

TWO CASE STUDIES

- ▶ *Accolades* magazine for College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- ▶ *Sciences at NC State* for College of Sciences
- ▶ Each has ended print magazine and launched a digital magazine
- ▶ Still produce printed annual report for donors and older alumni

ACCOLADES MAGAZINE CASE STUDY

- ▶ Yearly print alumni magazine for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- ▶ Will be launching first digital version in coming weeks
- ▶ Published at least twice per year
- ▶ Upcoming Issue: [Accolades Spring 2017 Issue](#)

COLLEGE OF SCIENCES CASE STUDY

- ▶ One of twelve colleges at NC State
- ▶ Newly formed in 2013
- ▶ Reader Survey
- ▶ It all starts with content; no amount of design can improve the base content
- ▶ Feature Story: [An Environment that Empowers](#)
- ▶ Feature Story: [The Proximity Principle](#)
- ▶ Quiz: [How Much Do You Know About Harrelson Hall?](#)
- ▶ Quiz: [What Element of the Periodic Table Are You?](#)

PART 3: CASE STUDIES


EMAIL

- ▶ HTML Email to all alumni, friends, students, faculty, and staff of college
- ▶ Collects stories published over previous one to two months

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

SCIENCES AT NC STATE


The Digital Magazine of the College of Sciences




The Student Life: Stories From Our College

What's it like to be a student in 2017? Meet four Sciences students who have made the most of their experiences, and learn how the college supports them and their peers.


[READ MORE »](#)



Q&A
One Student's Talk With Dean Ditto
Senior Jacob Lineberry talks with Dean Bill Ditto about the college's efforts to transform the student experience. »




Our Spaces
Go Inside a Leading Forensic Anthropology Lab
Forensic anthropologist Ann Ross' lab is a real-life version of your favorite forensics TV show. See what's inside. »



Quiz
Which Element of the Periodic Table Are You?
Are you a noble gas or more of a reactive metal? Take our NC State-themed quiz to find out where you fall on the periodic table. »



Video
Radmila Sazdanovic on Finding Beauty in Math
Mathematics faculty Radmila Sazdanovic uses algebraic topology to create visualizations that are both beautiful and useful. »



Alumni and Friends
Q&A: Alum and WIRED Blogger Rhett Allain
Physics alum Rhett Allain discusses his WIRED blog and the importance of science communication. »



Event
Register Now: State of the Sciences at Hunt Library
Join us for a night of family-friendly science fun, along with food and beer, in NC State's iconic Hunt Library. »

MORE NEWS

Videos: [Meet Our Extraordinary Faculty](#) »
[Family's Generosity Supports Students, Faculty](#) »
[Why Endocrine Disruptors Are Scary — And What You Can Do About It](#) »
[UNC System Teaching Award for Oliver-Hoyo; Professorships for Stefanski and Lloyd](#) »
[Bowden Named Head of Department of Chemistry](#) »

EVENTS | [View Calendar](#)

Apr 8 [Triangle SciTech Expo](#) »

Apr 18 [Story Collider: New Frontiers in Science](#) »

NC State College of Sciences, Campus Box 8201, Raleigh, NC 27695
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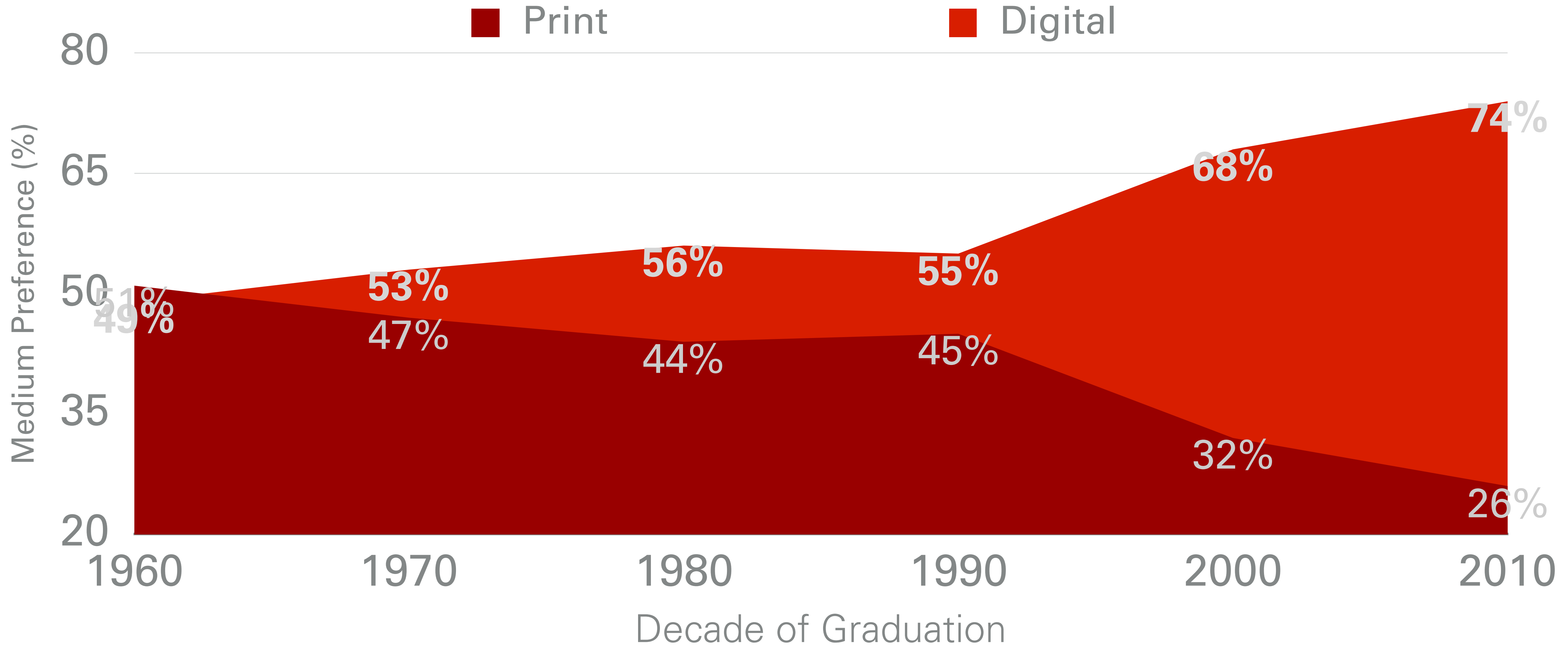
COMMUNICATION BEYOND EMAILS

- ▶ Repurpose content across as many platforms as possible
- ▶ Social media important to success of digital magazine
- ▶ Longer-term CRM integration to customize content per recipient

WHAT DOES THE DATA SAY?

- ▶ Post-2000 graduates prefer digital over print
- ▶ Pre-2000 graduates are largely split or indifferent
- ▶ The youngest alumni have very clear preference for digital
- ▶ Researchers propose that young Millennials and Generation Z will decide fate of magazines

MEDIUM PREFERENCES



MEDIUM PREFERENCES

- ▶ How would you prefer to read news and features from the College of Sciences?
- ▶ Three clear groups in the statistics
- ▶ Roughly correspond to generations and role of computers in education and work?

Graduation Year	Digital	Print
Pre-1972	44%	56%
1972-2003	56%	44%
2004-2016	73%	27%

CONTENT PREFERENCES

Level of Interest	Alumni Successes	Student Experiences	Non-Major Academics	Upcoming Events	Life as a Researcher	Faculty Honors	Support From Donors
Moderate or High	78%	69%	68%	68%	66%	56%	29%
Little or No	22%	31%	32%	32%	34%	44%	71%

NO DONOR STORIES?

- ▶ Data doesn't look good for donor stories
- ▶ Older alumni have more interest than younger
- ▶ Show impact that donors have without making donor the spotlight
- ▶ Except for when donor needs to be spotlighted

BRANDING, GIFTS, AND MAGAZINES

- ▶ Branding can help convert alumni into university brand advocates
- ▶ Branding has been shown to elicit donations by creating a sense of community among an institution's stakeholders
- ▶ Having an engaged alumni base has been shown to be a particularly credible form of advertising
- ▶ Studies show that magazines that continue to have print success have also been adopters of social media to increase reach and cultivate audience loyalty
- ▶ In a commercial setting, many magazines have transitioned from simply being a publication into being a brand. This brand extends beyond a traditional publication medium into other areas such as blogs, social media, email newsletters, and sometimes even merchandise

INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS

- ▶ Web, email, print, social media, etc. all play a reinforcing role with one another
- ▶ A single platform no longer reaches everyone
- ▶ Hook readers differently on each platform
- ▶ Ask individuals within story to share it through their own social accounts
- ▶ Producing content takes a lot of time
- ▶ We don't have a lot of time
- ▶ Think about how to repurpose

HOW HAVE YOUR COMMUNICATIONS TRANSCENDED MEDIUMS?

- ▶ Could be something that you're currently doing?
- ▶ Is there something you're hoping to do?
- ▶ What would you do in your wildest dreams?

VIDEO, AUDIO, AND MORE

- ▶ What other types of content can you include beyond basic copy?
- ▶ Competing against other content such as Facebook, TV, and other mainstream content
- ▶ How can you attract a user's attention and keep it?
- ▶ Doesn't necessarily start with flashy technology
- ▶ Starts with an engaging story that's presented in a captivating manner
- ▶ A quiz to hook readers into your publication

SHOWING DATA AND MAPS

- ▶ Google News Lab
- ▶ Tutorials on [Google Fusion Tables](#) and [Google Maps](#)
- ▶ Easily embeddable in most sites
- ▶ [Highcharts](#)

The screenshot displays a Google My Maps interface for Cape Hatteras National Seashore. The map shows the coastline of the Outer Banks, including Bodie Island, Pea Island, Hatteras Island, and Ocracoke Island. The legend on the left is organized into four sections, each with a red checkmark:

- Seashore Sections**
 - Bodie Island
 - Pea Island
 - Hatteras Island
 - Ocracoke Island
- Bodie Island Area**
 - Coquina Beach
 - Bodie Island Lighthouse
- Pea Island Area**
 - Oregon Inlet Fishing Area
 - Pea Island Visitor's Center
 - New Inlet
- Cape Hatteras Area**
 - Salvo Day Use Area

The map includes various geographical labels such as Alligator River, Pamlico Sound, and several towns. A search bar at the top left contains the text "Cape Hatteras National...". The bottom of the map shows the Google My Maps logo and a scale bar indicating 5 miles.

AUDIO AND VIDEO

- ▶ Quick and rough “social” videos
- ▶ Audio snippets
- ▶ 360° video

Fred Wright

Professor, Biological Sciences and Statistics



“Team science and interdisciplinary work are very important here.”



[Transcript](#)

Denis Fourches

Assistant Professor, Chemistry



“I haven’t seen what we’re doing here anywhere else in the country.”



[Transcript](#)

IMPROVING YOUR TEXT

- ▶ Use subheads
- ▶ Keep paragraphs short
- ▶ Using lists (aka. “listicles”)
- ▶ Bold key words and use links

MINIMUM VIABLE PRODUCT (MVP) AND CONSTANT ITERATION

- ▶ Data is important
- ▶ Don't rely on data too much
- ▶ Try small experiments and see how your audience reacts
- ▶ When there's disagreement, test the suggestions!
- ▶ Have to start somewhere
- ▶ Alumni communications and publications increasingly polished but understand what polished means

HOW TO GATHER USER FEEDBACK

- ▶ Send follow-up survey to random small sample of readership
- ▶ Conduct larger, periodic reader surveys
- ▶ Usability tests

LOOKING FURTHER AHEAD

- ▶ Chatbots and Amazon Alexa
- ▶ Use stories in targeted social media ad campaigns
- ▶ Build brand awareness and potentially engage new donors or re-engage alumni
- ▶ Including VR might help your brand seem more cutting edge, but it seems unlikely to catch on for magazines and news content

NEXT STEPS

- ▶ Don't be overwhelmed
- ▶ Do a few things well rather than many things not well
- ▶ Build upon incremental successes rather than trying to make everything perfect
- ▶ Look at documentation for tutorials and additional reading

SHAMELESS PLUG

- ▶ Master of Arts in Technology and Communication
- ▶ Three-course certificate option too
- ▶ UNC School of Media and Journalism
- ▶ matc.mj.unc.edu

MATC Curriculum

Semester	Course #	Course Title	Credits	Format
Summer I		Orientation	0	On-campus
Fall I	MEJO 711	Writing for Digital Media	3	Online
Fall I	MEJO 716	Research Methods and Applications	3	Online
Spring I	MEJO 717	Information Visualization	3	Online
Spring I	MEJO 713	Digital Data and Analytics	3	Online
Summer II		Summer Residency	0	On-campus
Summer II	MEJO 715	New Media and Society	3	Online
Fall II	MEJO 720	Strategic Communication	3	Online
Fall II	MEJO 721	Usability and Multimedia Design	3	Online
Spring II	MEJO 718	Media Law for the Digital Age	3	Online
Spring II	MEJO 719	Leadership in Digital Media Economics	3	Online
Fall III	MEJO 992	Thesis Project (Non-Traditional Thesis)	3	Online
Total			30	

Certificate in Technology and Communication

Not ready for the full master's degree? Take a look at the MJ-school's online graduate-level certificate program, comprising:

MEJO 711: Writing for Digital Media
MEJO 712: Visual Communication and Multimedia
MEJO 713: Digital Data and Analytics

The MATC builds on the success of the school's Certificate in Technology and Communication program, offered separately from the MATC. Certificate students may apply to the MATC program and, if admitted, may transfer credit for MEJO 711 and MEJO 713 into the degree program. The credit must have been earned within five years of MATC admission. The GRE is not required for certificate admission.

Learn more: mj.unc.edu/cert

QUESTIONS?

go.ncsu.edu/no-words