

Welcome...

Reinventing the TV News:

Confirmed Attendees:

- If the television news show were reinvented today, what would it look like?
- How could it be more social, engaging or relevant to the viewer?
- How could it use available technology to achieve that?
- How could new technology be developed to make sure it delivered the right audiences to advertisers and provided a strong financial return to news organizations?

We've removed
the names from
this section.

The goal of this Think & Do workshop is to begin to provide some answers to those questions. To facilitate that, we have organized a day full of discussion, play, and high-speed creativity. Participants will listen to and, in many cases, give short presentations. But much of the day will be loosely structured and largely shaped by you, the group of experts we've invited to participate.

We've tried to bring together the right mix of participants to promote a stimulating experience around these issues. In attendance will be representatives from news organizations from around the country, executives from leading tech firms and the advertising industry, and professors, staff and students from USC.

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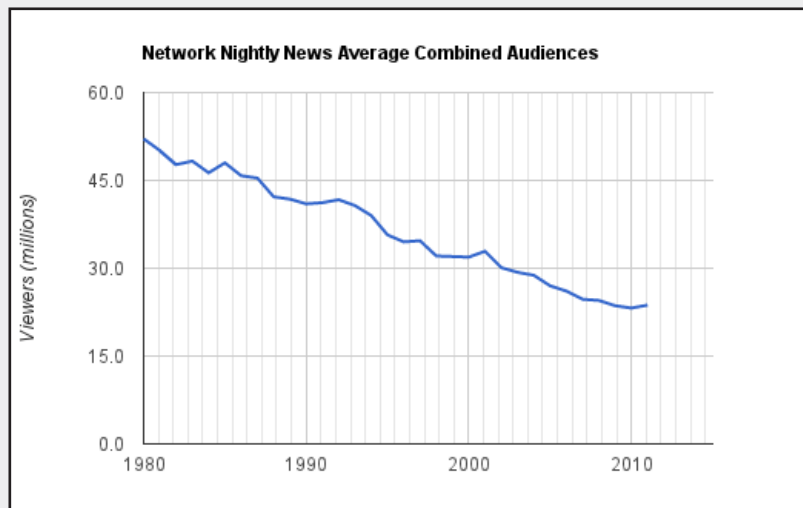
So what do we mean by TV news?

It's a term and product that has become increasingly difficult to define as more and more diverse producers have entered the market. On September 14th, we will focus on a set of products that we have been referring to as daily news shows. The 6 PM local news and the 6:30 PM national news are two examples. Cable news shows and the late local news qualify as well, as do daily web-only programs, whether created by the mainstream media or by non-traditional newspeople who have built their audiences through linking and sharing. The shows we're interested in have recognizable brands, earn revenue, and present their take on the day's news stories based on their perceptions of audience demand.

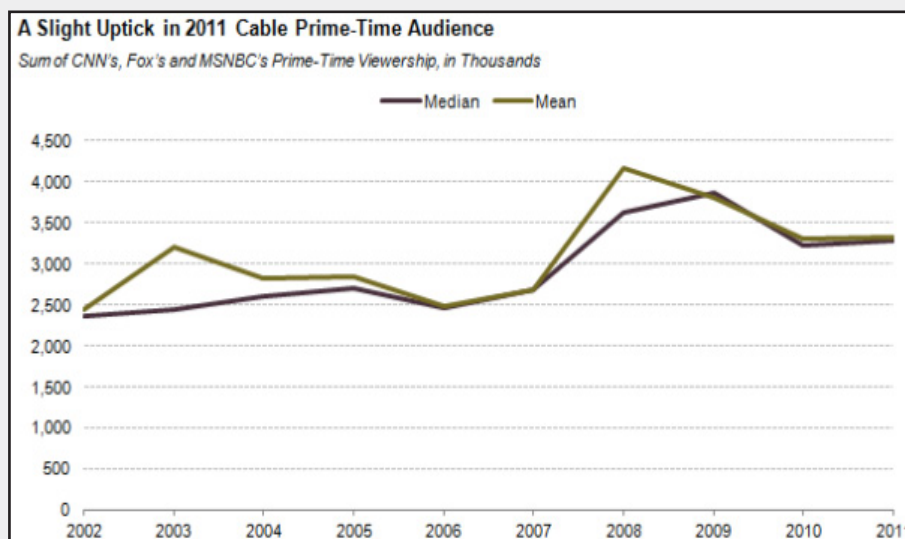


The Disruption:

The national networks' best evening news year ever, measured by combined audience, was 1980, when a nightly average of more than 52 million Americans watched one of the three programs. In June of that year, CNN went on the air, and national network evening news audiences have been shrinking ever since.



Cable news audiences haven't grown much recently, however. And, as you can see in the chart below, cable audiences are still small compared to network audiences.



Whatever you make of those numbers, something was disrupted in 1980; the disruption seems to have continued ever since; and we think we ought to get in on it.

A few things to think about while you prepare for September 14th:

Preferences: 74% of Americans watch local TV news or get news from local TV news websites at least weekly, far more than the other news media. Viewers tend to rely on the medium mostly for weather, breaking news, and, to a lesser degree, traffic. Source: [PEW, How people learn about their local community](#).

Time: As was the case in 2000, people now say they spend 57 minutes on average getting the news from TV, radio, or newspapers on a given day. Today, they also spend an additional 13 minutes getting news from their computers (mobile phones and tablets not included). This is one of the highest totals since the mid-1990s. Source: [PEW, How people learn about their local community](#).

Trust: Local TV seems to be the most trustworthy source of news. Both a [PEW study](#) and a [USC Annenberg - LA Times poll](#) found that people consider local TV news more believable than the networks, the cable shows, newspapers, and radio news.

Story Length: The median length of a story package on local TV news is 41 seconds. On national network news, that median length is 2 minutes, 23 seconds. On YouTube, the median length of the most popular news videos is 2 minutes and 1 second. And the variation in the length of those YouTube videos is noteworthy: 18% of the most popular videos are longer than 5 minutes, and 29% are less than one minute long. Source: [PEW, On YouTube and News](#).

Story Spread: Of the YouTube videos originally produced by a news organization, 39% were posted by non-professional users. Source: [PEW, On YouTube and News](#).

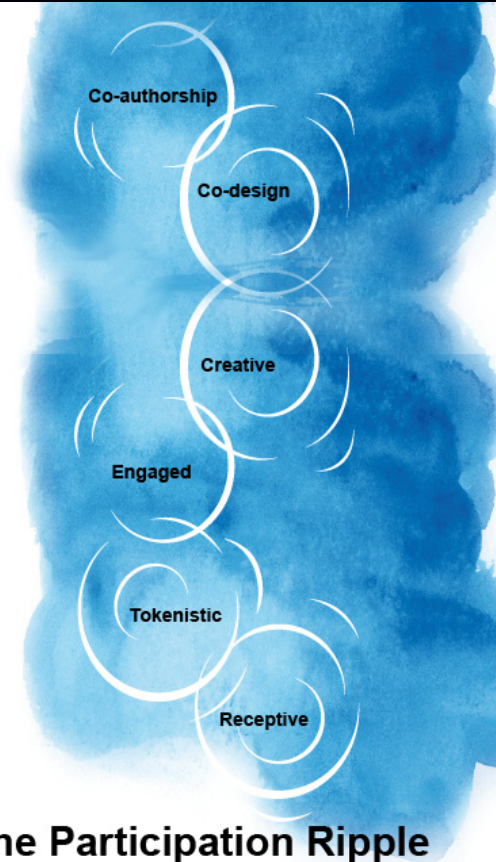
News on Demand: The Huffington Post's video news division, HuffPo Live, doesn't think its audience wants to watch news by appointment. It produces 12- to 35-minute news blocks, but none of them come on air at any standard scheduled time, and all of them are further divided into segments that users can watch in any order they please. Source: [The Nieman Journalism Lab](#).

Audience Engagement:

We are witnessing a significant shift in the production and consumption of news programming in the era of participatory culture. With the rise of citizen journalism, and the growing accessibility of social media and grassroots media production tools, the field of news media is gradually opening up, allowing for the engagement of a multitude of voices.

However, the main proponents of the participatory turn in television and mass media tend to see participation as a uniform concept when, in fact, there are many degrees of participation, each potentially having a different effect on the news.

A close analysis of audience engagement with other forms of media reveals a complex ripple of participation. For example, TV shows, bands and other forms of media have aggressively begun to incorporate social interactions from their audience into the content they produce. This trend is only beginning to be explored with the news.



The Participation Ripple

Type	Defining Features	Examples
Receptive	Consumption-based: audience receives a finished artistic product	Watching show
Tokenistic	Individual small acts of participation within a media program	Checking the TV show's website to learn more about your favorite character
Engaged	Collaborative but highly top-down structured participation in a pre-designed project	Participating in an alternative reality game created by media producer
Creative	Participation in a fan-initiated but branded activity	Walking Dead marathon (3 mile run/walk in which you get touched by a zombie and then become one)
Co-design	Authors invite participants to help shape design or structure of the project	Radiohead fans decide what songs go into the album
Co-authorship	Participants' structural contributions are formally recognized and rewarded	Fan takes on role of Mad Men character on Twitter, Mad Men celebrates, promotes fan

What is a Think & Do?:

The Annenberg Innovation Lab offers a Think & Do Process to foster an open space for people of varied disciplines and backgrounds to come together, effectively learn from each other, and create together.

The process starts with a focal question, a decision about the focus of the innovation: What are we trying to innovate? AIL in conjunction with a stakeholder in the final deliverable form a design team to guide the T&D process, synthesize participants' perspectives, and identify possible incubation projects.

Although each Think & Do workshop is unique, all are based on the same principles.

- **Thinkering** means to think about something by tinkering with objects relating to the innovation under consideration. It is unguided, exploratory and collaborative, and used to find solutions where none are obvious. In other words, it is an active form of thinking.
- **Multidisciplinary Participants** are critical. Key industry leaders, academics, customers, users and other stakeholders are invited. The participants are asked to come and be mentally present throughout the entire session, respecting the goal of the day and the resources allotted.
- **Curated Spaces and Provocative Questions** promote exploration. Think & Do workshops lead with a key question in order to spark dialogue with and proceed into creative activities to foster and explore broader themes embedded within the question. Other than this loose structure, each workshop is largely shaped by the group assembled and the materials at hand.
- **Play Matters.** As [John Dewey](#) says, "Knowledge is not a matter of having a set of facts; it is not a domain that stands apart from the world. Knowledge is the offspring of doing." Play is the most important work we perform at a Think & Do workshop. It is through play that we acquire basic knowledge and skills fundamental to our culture.
- **Place Matters.** It has an impact on how participants engage in the Think & Do experience and also in what is done going forward. Think & Do spaces have the flexibility to be transformed and foster a new culture of innovation, imagination and creativity. This physical space extends into the virtual with an additional suite of AIL tools.

But, in the end, the space is only as good as the people within it. Being part of a Think & Do workshop requires a willingness to be open and understand that change is a process. It not only requires expertise of many, but also a willingness to be humble and listen to others, to be ready for the unexpected and to challenge authority and the current standards of how things are and what they look like. We know, change doesn't happen by magic but by a community willing to think, play and participate.