

Is it newsworthy?

Adapted from the Office of Strategic Marketing and Communications, University of Nebraska Omaha

When determining if a story is newsworthy, a journalist weighs what is called “news values.” News values, which are outlined below, help a journalist determine whether an event, person, place or topic should be covered.

Impact

One of the most important elements of newsworthiness is the impact of the topic on your audience. Oftentimes, the most people affected, the greater the news interest.

Proximity

Journalists are interested in what impacts the community, making proximity an important element of determining if a topic is newsworthy. Occasionally, experts can help a journalist localize larger national stories that impact more than just their city or state.

Timeliness

Your audience expects information in a timely manner. If a topic is time sensitive, pay closer attention to it than evergreen piece of content. Content CAN expire if it is tied to a timely event or instance.

Prominence

Think about the subject of your news ideas. If high-profile figures are coming to visit town, this is high in prominence and might require more of your time than lower-level pieces.

Conflict

Is there unrest around a certain topic? This might make for a newsworthy piece. These stories are almost always controversial; be sure to go through the appropriate avenues to access comments from university and local leadership.

Human Interest

Is there a connection between your audience and the people available to interview and write about? These stories will connect with your audience and speak to a shared experience. Human interest elements can also add news value to other stories outside of feature-style pieces.

Novelty/Oddity

If there is something strange happening on campus (monkey running around? Orange Starbucks drinks?), cover it. It doesn't happen every day, and you might look silly if you DON'T cover it.