



Guidelines for Broadcasters on Promoting User-generated Content and Media and Information Literacy

Martin Scott



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

With the support of
**Communication and
Information Sector**



**GUIDELINES FOR BROADCASTERS
ON PROMOTING USER-GENERATED CONTENT
AND MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY**

Martin Scott

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PREFACE

I am pleased to commend this work to you. It began with the a suggestion from UNESCO that the CBA might undertake some original research into how broadcasters round the world were handling User Generated Content (UGC) and promoting media and information literacy (MIL). This research, with support from UNESCO, was conducted by Lisa Stribbling and was published by Martin Scott in Commonwealth Broadcaster in January 2009, and is available on the CBA website, http://www.cba.org.uk/Resources/publications/Media_Literacy_UGC.php .

The responses showed a huge variety of practice, from whole new departments being set up to supervise and promote MIL and UGC, to no promotion at all. As this is a new area, it was clear that many of the broadcasting organisations wanted Guidelines to help them promote MIL and UGC in the most appropriate ways. After further discussion with UNESCO, and further support from them, this current publication arose to try to fill this need. Martin Scott covers the whole area thoroughly, including outlining a typology of UGC, a discussion of who contributes UGC and guidance on promoting MIL and UGC in formal and non-formal education and in communities.

Elizabeth Smith

Secretary-General, Commonwealth Broadcasting Association

FOREWORD

UNESCO has again partnered with the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association to prepare resources needed by different stakeholders in the Information Society. On this occasion UNESCO and CBA joined forces to encourage broadcasters, particularly from the developing countries, to interact with their viewers and listeners to enhance the quality of the User-Generated Content (UGC) through improved Media and Information Literacy (MIL) of their audiences and, more specifically, UGC producers.

It should be emphasized that the ultimate objective of this action is to empower people to seek, evaluate, use and create information/content, to encourage social inclusion and public debate on major development issues and, ultimately, to improve people's lives.

Guidelines for Broadcasters on Promoting User-Generated Content and Media and Information Literacy by Martin Scott is indeed a very useful and timely reference for broadcasters, their audiences, and many others who are interested in the public debate about media content and MIL related issues.

This publication will contribute to building inclusive knowledge societies through information and communication by promoting freedom of expression and fostering free, independent and pluralistic media and universal access to information and knowledge.

Abdul Waheed Khan

Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, UNESCO

1. INTRODUCTION

The use of audience generated material by broadcasters is not new. From phone-ins and 'letters to the editor', to vox pops and eye witness accounts, audience contributions have been central to broadcast output for decades. The new phenomenon is that rapid advances in media technology mean that audiences are able to gather more and wider ranging content to offer to broadcasters. And not only is new media technology available, it is also more accessible and increasingly affordable to members of the public.

This growth in 'user-generated content' (UGC) provides broadcasters with numerous opportunities; they have greater access to a higher volume and increased diversity of content for both news and non-news programming and the UGC they are offered also provides a vehicle for strengthening their relationship with audiences.

Another important and increasingly recognised feature of the relationship between media and society is media and information literacy (MIL). In December 2008, the European Parliament passed a resolution which adopted the recommendations of a report on 'media literacy in a digital world'¹. This resolution recognised the importance of media literacy and recommended that compulsory media education modules be incorporated into teacher training for all school levels. The European Parliament also recognised UNESCO's role in promoting media education through, among other things, its Grünwald Declaration (1982) and the Paris Agenda: 12 recommendations for media education (2007). Developments such as these have been described as 'indicative of a positive trend that attention is turning toward a policy and regulatory framework to guide and support a systematic take-up of media education'².

In 2008, the CBA and UNESCO published the results of a survey of 72 Commonwealth broadcasters which looked at the nature of UGC. It considered what use they make of UGC and their involvement in promoting MIL. The survey identified a lack of initiatives by broadcasters to encourage UGC and promote MIL. But it also revealed that broadcasters noted an almost universal desire for assistance in these areas.

The aim of these guidelines is to provide such assistance by outlining ways in which broadcasters can promote MIL to their audiences and at the same time encourage the production of relevant UGC for broadcast.

The promotion of UGC and MIL and the use of UGC are vital for helping the media to fulfil its democratic functions in society. By providing not only a space for the public to express themselves but also the skills and capacity to take part in public debate, broadcasters can ensure that citizens' right to freedom of expression is realised. In particular, by promoting MIL and UGC broadcasters can help to ensure that they achieve the following functions attributed to the media.

- A channel of information and education through which citizens can communicate with each other.
- A disseminator of stories, ideas and information.

- A corrective to the “natural asymmetry of information” (Islam 2002:1) between governors and governed and between competing private agents.
- A facilitator of informed debate between diverse social actors, encouraging the resolution of disputes by democratic means.
- A means by which a society learns about itself and builds a sense of community, and which shapes the understanding of values, customs and tradition.
- A vehicle for cultural expression and cultural cohesion within and between nations³.

The demand from viewers, listeners and readers to participate, debate and comment via the media is now a permanent feature of society. If broadcasters do not learn to make effective use of UGC then audiences will switch to other media platforms that actively encourage audience participation. These guidelines aim to enable broadcasters to better meet the changing needs of both the audience and the broadcast media industry. While these guidelines are written principally for broadcasters, it is hoped they will also be of use to regulators, media education organisations, the wider media industry and all those interested in promoting both UGC and MIL.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Key issues

The CBA and UNESCO have collaborated in the past to produce guidelines for broadcasters on editorial principles and broadcasting regulation⁴. This third set of guidelines addresses a less established topic and the evolving nature of UGC and MIL means that at this stage it is not possible to produce a set of principles for broadcasters which are entirely definitive and unambiguous. The production of these guidelines has been shaped by four key areas of focus with regard to broadcasting, UGC and MIL.

The first key issue concerns the nature of the UGC that individual broadcasters are aiming to encourage. Some broadcasters will be keen to encourage more UGC. For others, reviewing and selecting content from an excess of UGC has become a particularly pressing problem. For many broadcasters the focus is on the 'quality' of the material generated by audiences. But while encouraging 'better quality' UGC (however that may be defined) might appear a worthwhile aim, pursuing this goal alone could serve only to further amplify the voices of the better resourced members of the audience and further marginalise the poor and disempowered. The aim of these guidelines, therefore, is to provide guidance on how to encourage a greater diversity of material from a wider range of voices: material that serves both the public and commercial needs of broadcasters *and* the viewing and democratic needs of the widest possible audience.

Secondly, MIL refers to all manner of skills and competencies including the ability to evaluate media functions and seek, use and create media content. As these guidelines are concerned with promoting UGC as well as MIL, it is specifically the *creation* of content which is of concern here, although this should not detract from the important role that broadcasters have to play in encouraging all aspects of MIL.

Thirdly, tensions can arise between institutional, commercial and public interests when broadcasters become involved in promoting MIL. Broadcasters have a responsibility to educate audiences but they also have to make efficient use of resources and maintain a competitive advantage. There are occasions when promoting MIL does not directly encourage UGC and other occasions when encouraging UGC may not promote MIL. These guidelines attempt to navigate between these tensions in order to enable broadcasters to identify a 'best fit' between these competing issues.

Fourthly, any attempt to offer guidelines to all broadcasters around the world must offer advice that is to some extent generic as individual broadcasters operate in very different circumstances with very different audiences as their focus. This is particularly true with regards to promoting UGC because income inequalities and access to technology means that broadcasters receive and can make use of widely differing amounts, types and 'qualities' of UGC. While the guidelines in this report aim to have relevance for all broadcasters it is unavoidable that some of the guidance will be more relevant to some organisations than others.

2.2 Definitions of UGC and MIL

What is UGC?

User-generated content (UGC), also known as ‘consumer-generated content’, ‘user-created content’, ‘citizen journalism’, ‘social media’ or ‘participatory media’, is a relatively new term, used to describe what has been, until very recently, a remarkably niche phenomenon. UGC refers to all publicly available media content that is produced by audiences rather than by the broadcaster (or commissioned by a broadcaster from independent production companies or individual contributors). UGC can describe content gathered via any media technology, from faxes and text messages to digital photos, videos, blogs and podcasts. It is published by both traditional media sources (largely broadcasters) and non-traditional media sources (such as Twitter and YouTube)⁵.

What is MIL?

In contemporary information societies, citizens need to be able to effectively access, organize, analyze, evaluate, and create a range of images, sounds and texts on a daily basis if they are to play a full part in society⁶. These capabilities are referred to as ‘media and information literacy’ (MIL) which UNESCO define as the ability to ‘interpret and make informed judgments as users of information and media, as well as to become skilful creators and producers of information and media messages in their own right’⁷. Media and information literate citizens must have a good understanding of the functions of the media in a democratic society including a basic knowledge of concepts such as freedom of speech, the free press and the right to information.

The Alexandria Proclamation of 2005 describes information literacy and lifelong learning as the ‘beacons of the Information Society, illuminating the courses to development, prosperity and freedom. Information literacy empowers people in all walks of life to seek, evaluate, use and create information effectively to achieve their personal, social, occupational and educational goals. It is a basic human right in a digital world and promotes social inclusion in all nations’⁸.

2.3 UGC: Use, Treatment and ‘Quality’

Before giving guidance on how broadcasters can encourage UGC, it is useful to provide an outline of how broadcasters currently use and treat UGC and to describe the nature of the UGC they receive. The results presented below are based on a joint UNESCO / CBA survey of 72 Commonwealth broadcasters in 2008⁹.

Use of UGC

The results of the survey of Commonwealth broadcasters showed that, as might be expected, ‘older’ forms of UGC, such as letters and faxes, are used much more widely and frequently by broadcasters than ‘newer’ forms, such as podcasts and social networking sites. Phone-ins, letters and faxes are used every day by over 60% of broadcasters, whilst 30% of broadcasters do not regularly use blogs, websites or podcasts.

Although all broadcasters claimed to be regularly using at least three different forms of UGC, the range in the number of different types of UGC used by different broadcasters varies dramatically. The Grenada Broadcasting Network, for example, uses only three forms (faxes, letter and phone-ins) while Radio Television Hong Kong makes at least some use of all forms of UGC every day (including significant amounts of material from social networking sites, podcasts and blogs).

Perhaps surprisingly, no obvious relationship was found between the level of economic development of a country and the amount or range of UGC used by broadcasters in that country. African broadcasters, such as Voice of Nigeria and Radio Mozambique, claimed to use the widest range and greatest amount of UGC.

The ways in which broadcasters claim to make use of UGC fell into one of four categories. Firstly, the majority of examples of use of UGC amongst the broadcasters' sampled took the form of phone-in programmes. The nature of these programmes varied greatly, as did the procedures for moderating callers. In most cases, these phone-in shows also make use of texts, emails and faxes sent in by the audience. The second most popular use of UGC is to supplement news programmes. This usually takes the form of audience generated stills and footage and occasionally comments. The third way in which UGC is used by broadcasters is to provide content for their websites. This material ranges from comments on the main news stories, to broadcasters such as TV Ontario, which provides facilities for users to upload pictures and footage onto discussion boards. Finally isolated examples of other uses of UGC were identified which did not fall into any of the categories above. These included 'citizen journalist' programmes which makes use of material produced by voluntary community reporters and 'digital storytelling' projects produced in community workshops.

Treatment of UGC

Most broadcasters have procedures in place for checking and sorting UGC material prior to broadcast. However, there is frequently little consistency in how these procedures are implemented for different forms of UGC and some UGC is broadcast without any editorial screening. Some broadcasters operate time delays, edit material where appropriate and use dedicated moderators whilst others decline to alter or review some UGC material in any way. The following three examples help to illustrate the diversity of practices; Grenada Broadcasting Network puts phone-in calls directly on air with no screening. SBS Australia screens their phone-in calls and then broadcasts with a slight time delay to limit chances of defamation or inappropriate comment. The Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation's letters are initially reviewed by a producer or presenter and any queries are passed to the legal department. Once cleared, they are read on air. While two thirds of broadcasters have some form of guidelines on the use of UGC, these guidelines are frequently not comprehensive enough to cover all, or even most, forms of UGC. Of concern is the fact that fewer than half of the broadcasters taking part in the survey have policies towards the use of letters and pictures submitted by the audience despite these being two of the most widely and frequently used forms of UGC. Only 10% of broadcasters have guidelines which cover all forms of UGC. Broadcasters from developed countries are more likely to have guidelines than broadcasters from developing countries. Several broadcasters indicated that they would like to use

more UGC in their programming but that they required assistance in how to deal with such material appropriately.

Quality of UGC

When broadcasters were asked to rate the 'quality' of the UGC submitted, they judged texts, faxes, phone-ins, emails and websites to provide the UGC of the highest quality. It is perhaps remarkable that no broadcaster described the quality of texts or faxes as anything less than 'good'. By contrast, at least 50% of broadcasters described the quality of blogs, footage and podcasts as 'fair' or 'poor'. The concerns of broadcasters regarding the 'quality' of content referred not only to the technical quality of UGC but also to the quality of storytelling and more general production values. The infringement of copyright, indecency, disregard for criminal law, and child protection issues were also raised as issues of concern with regard to the 'quality' of UGC.

Although the survey did not ask specifically about the quantity of material broadcasters received, broadcasters' comments did suggest that while some are keen to encourage more UGC, for others, the submission of too much material is a serious concern.

2.4 UGC: Challenges and Opportunities

UGC is now a well established feature of the media landscapes in most countries. If broadcasters are to make the most of the opportunities that UGC provides it is important for them to be mindful of these opportunities and of the potential hazards.

Benefits of using UGC

- Perhaps the most apparent benefit for broadcasters of using UGC is that it provides free access to material which they might not otherwise obtain. The most obvious examples are footage of breaking news stories. Recent high profile examples include the post election riots in Iran and the terrorist attacks in Mumbai.
- As well as providing material for current news stories, audiences can also *generate* news stories by suggesting ideas and providing new material and insights. The expertise and skills of certain members of the audience can also be utilised to help develop news stories.
- Outside of the newsroom, audiences can provide a wide range of content, from personal biographies, to fictional stories. By enabling members of the audience to contribute their own stories, broadcasters are better able to represent and reflect the interests and concerns of their audience in general.
- The benefits of using UGC extend well beyond the material that audiences can provide. Using UGC can help strengthen the relationship between the broadcaster and audience. Research suggests that even citizens who do not contribute UGC place a high value on a broadcaster's use of such material¹⁰.
- The use of UGC can provide broadcasters with a competitive advantage. As audiences become more media information literate and they are able to access and contribute to a

range of UGC-based media platforms such as Twitter and Wikipedia, then they increasingly expect the same opportunities for interactivity to be provided by traditional broadcasters. Those broadcasters who adapt to and make use of UGC will be best placed to thrive in an increasingly competitive media marketplace¹¹.

Benefits of promoting UGC

- By actively promoting UGC, audiences can be encouraged to contribute the types of UGC broadcasters most value. This may help to reduce the amount of material broadcasters receive that is not suitable for broadcast.
- Many of the moving, inspiring, thought provoking and entertaining stories that audiences have to tell simply never get told. If broadcasters have the courage to seek out more stories and empower audiences to tell these stories for themselves, rather than just waiting for it to be sent to them, broadcasters can air original, high quality content which would not otherwise be produced.
- If broadcasters actively encourage MIL they can reach out to communities that they may not otherwise reach. By giving these communities a voice, broadcasters can ensure they represent their entire audience and not just the small minority who have the resources or the inclination to contribute material on a regular basis.

Potential hazards of using UGC

The widely celebrated rise in UGC has been accompanied by a concern amongst broadcasters and others in regard to the commercial, legal and practical implications of broadcasting such content. These are undoubtedly genuine concerns, but there are practical ways of managing them.

- Audiences do provide broadcasters with valuable content but the quantity of UGC that broadcasters receive means that moderating or sorting material is often difficult and time consuming. Furthermore, as it is often not possible to determine the revenue generated directly as a result of UGC, it is difficult to establish how cost effective using UGC is¹².
- A key concern of broadcasters is that the UGC that they receive is either not of sufficient quality or relevance for broadcast. Broadcasters can however take steps to mitigate this concern by managing more effectively the way they promote UGC.
- A further concern for broadcasters is the reliability and accuracy of material. Over 80% of respondents to the aforementioned survey of Commonwealth broadcasters said that they would like guidance relating to the legality and suitability of UGC. Many larger broadcasting organisations do have guidelines relating to the appropriate use of UGC which are freely available online.
- The legality of UGC relates not just to the content of material but can also concern the way in which it was obtained. For example, there is legislation in most countries concerning covert recording or filming. Broadcasters must have measures in place and seek legal advice where necessary to ensure that the content they broadcast has not been obtained contrary to their guidelines.

2.5 MIL: Promotion and the role of broadcasters

In a set of guidelines relating to the promotion of MIL, it is useful to give a brief outline of the nature of MIL promotion in general and of the role of broadcasters in particular.

MIL has been an important component of the school curriculum for a number of years in several countries in Europe and Australasia, such as the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, Germany, France, Sweden, Malta and Hungary¹³. There has also been recent progress in other countries such as the Philippines and Argentina. In 2000 Argentina adopted a 'School and Media' programme designed to promote media education in primary and secondary education and to help students to make their voices heard in society through the media¹⁴. However, in much of the rest of the world, MIL within the formal education system suffers from a lack of funding, a lack of recognition and there is often indifference towards it from policy-makers¹⁵. In this context, 'partnerships between the media industry and formal educational institutions are a necessity for the future development of MIL in most contexts'¹⁶. The 'School and Media' programme in Argentina, for example, was only made possible by the support of various broadcasting organisations.

MIL activities taking place outside of formal education are often the result of collaborations between broadcasters and cultural centres, community media or specific MIL not-for-profit organisations¹⁷. Although no formal international review has been conducted of such collaborations, there are numerous examples of successful initiatives particularly in Canada, Germany and Australia. In Canada, for example, the *Media Awareness Network* which is an independent, not-for-profit organisation specialising in producing high quality media literacy learning resources has the support of major national broadcasting groups.

The results of the recent survey of Commonwealth broadcasters showed clear support amongst broadcasters around the world for the principle of promoting MIL; 96% of broadcasters agreed that it is important for them to promote MIL. Despite this, only 40% of broadcasters were actually involved in any form of MIL initiatives. Those initiatives they were involved in were almost entirely directed at young people. In light of this, 97% of broadcasters expressed a desire for guidelines on promoting MIL.

2.6 MIL: Challenges and Opportunities

In existing literature on MIL the benefits for individuals and for wider society are frequently discussed. If broadcasters are to be involved in promoting MIL then it is useful to outline the benefits to them as well. The most apparent benefits are summarised below, followed by an account of some of the potential hazards of promoting MIL with respect to encouraging UGC.

Benefits of promoting MIL

- Encouraging UGC is one of the long term consequences of promoting MIL. As audiences become more willing and able to create their own material, so the opportunities for broadcasters to make use of UGC will only increase and the quality of UGC will improve.

- Promoting MIL is an effective way of strengthening relationships with the audience and developing trust and loyalty.
- Working with audiences, whether through online message boards or in community workshops is a valuable way for broadcasters to get to know their audience better. By interacting with audiences and valuing what they have to say, broadcasters can become more responsive to their interests.
- Promoting MIL is a vital element of the democratic duty of the media. It is also a key element of broadcasters' public service commitments.
- Promoting MIL will help to counter claims that broadcaster's use of UGC is entirely based around extracting cheap content from audiences. Broadcasters are one of the few institutions with the capacity to promote MIL and in doing so can play a vital role in enabling citizens to take part in public debates.
- If the media sector is to grow, promoting MIL is an important way of developing the creative talent in a country. Teaching media production skills is an important way of nurturing the creatives of the future, such as screenwriters, directors and producers.
- Promoting MIL is an important way of helping audiences to appreciate different types of media content such as specialist film, international programming and news and current affairs.

Potential hazards of promoting MIL with respect to encouraging UGC

- In the past, support for MIL from media organisations has been accused of favouring 'short-term initiatives with poorly defined learning outcomes'¹⁸. By working in partnership with media literacy professionals, broadcasters can ensure that they provide 'quality' MIL projects.
- Support for MIL from the media industry can be perceived as being purely commercially motivated. Any support needs to be clearly specified and transparent in order to avoid accusations of bias. The involvement of independent external bodies, such as the Ministry of Education and other public bodies can help to avoid such concerns¹⁹.
- There is concern that a purely 'technical' emphasis on media production can lead to the neglect of other aspects of MIL such as critical thinking skills. 'Production skills should be a part of but not the sole structure and framework in which to teach media literacy'²⁰.

3. UGC TYPOLOGY AND TREATMENT

3.1 Typology of UGC

Recent research by the University of Cardiff²¹ found widespread unease with the term ‘user-generated content’ (UGC). Both journalists and audiences found the term to be inadequate for describing so many different forms of material, from phone ins and faxes to podcasts and digital stories. The researchers conclude that the term ‘UGC’ masks five very different types of material. The nature of these five different types of UGC is outlined in Table 1.

It is important for broadcasters to distinguish between the different types of UGC because they are used in different ways, valued differently, provide different opportunities and suffer from a variety of weaknesses. By distinguishing between these different types of UGC, broadcasters can promote UGC more appropriately and effectively²².

The nature of each of these different forms of UGC is outlined in more detail below along with general guidance as to how such material can be encouraged and how it should be treated by broadcasters.

Table 1: Different forms of UGC

Type of UGC	Description and use	Examples
Audience generated news content	Forms of UGC used by news such as images, experiences and ‘new’ stories.	Breaking news stills, audio and video, case studies and story tip offs.
Audience comment	Expressions of audience opinion.	Contributions to online discussion boards or radio phone ins
Collaborative content	Non-news material produced through collaborations between broadcasters and contributors.	Short films, personal biographies.
Interactive journalism	The collaborative creation of news content.	Audiences researching and adding to news stories
Other non-news content	All other non-news material.	Reviews, non-news images, recommendations.

3.2 Treating UGC appropriately

Numerous different opportunities are now available to contributors to publicise the content they create; from social networking and video sharing sites to personal blogs and print media. If traditional broadcasters are to compete with these other platforms and attract ‘quality’ UGC then they must treat, label and make use of material effectively and appropriately. Audiences will only contribute their material to broadcasters if they feel it will not be unnecessarily edited or used improperly and if they feel their contributions are recognised and valued by broadcasters.

Guidance is given further below as to how each of the five types of UGC should be treated. There are, however, some general guidelines that apply to all forms of UGC given here²³.

Moderation

- All UGC should be subject to the same editorial judgement and scrutiny as any other material with particular attention paid to issues of privacy, consent, copyright, child protection, defamation and taste and decency. The results of the recent UNESCO / CBA survey of Commonwealth broadcasters were encouraging on this point as almost all broadcasters reported that they do take these issues into account. Further to this, almost two thirds of broadcasters in the sample claim to have specific staff dedicated to the moderation of UGC.
- Moderation refers to the process of removing, modifying or refusing to publish unsuitable UGC. Moderation can be done through contributors but it is usually carried out by a supervisor whose responsibility it is to ensure that UGC is not irrelevant, or in any way obscene or illegal.
- Wherever UGC is used, a specific manager within the broadcasting organisation should be made editorially responsible for the content.
- There are three different ways of moderating UGC. Pre-moderation is the moderating of material before it can be accessed or *before* it is broadcast. Post-moderation is the moderation of material *after* it has been posted online when it is the moderator's role to decide as to whether it should continue to remain in the public domain. Reactive moderation is the moderation of material when and if contributors make the moderator aware of content they regard as unsuitable.
- Special care must be taken if material is suspected to have been supplied by a member of a lobby group or organisation with a vested interest in the material.
- A set of guidelines or details which explain clearly how UGC is dealt with should be easily available. Contributors should be made aware that in submitting their material, they agree to these guidelines. The guidelines should include details of how UGC will be credited, if, why and how UGC will be edited and how it will be used and moderated.
- When editing any UGC, broadcasters must ensure that they do not distort the meaning or the overall feel of the content and contributors should be given the opportunity to suggest changes or to decline broadcast.

Labelling

- In the aforementioned survey of Commonwealth broadcasters, 10% of broadcasters in the sample admitted to not always making audiences aware of the origins of UGC. If UGC is not appropriately labelled then it fails to give contributors the credit they deserve and can mislead audiences.
- UGC should not be described as coming from 'citizen journalists', as many contributors will not feel comfortable with this term. Nor should it be described as having been gathered by an audience member specifically for the particular broadcaster as this could lead to

confusion. Instead, broadcasters should establish their own way of acknowledging the use of UGC and be consistent in the way they use this label.

Use of UGC

- In most cases, UGC should only be used for the purpose(s) for which it was submitted. If the broadcaster wishes to use it in another way then the permission of the contributor should be sought. It is for this reason that the contact details of contributors should always accompany any UGC submitted.
- Having dedicated programmes, programme slots or web pages where UGC is regularly used will not only normalise the promotion, use and consumption of UGC but will signal broadcaster's commitment to using and eliciting such material.
- Broadcasters should make use of a wide range of different forms of UGC in order to encourage a wide range of material.
- Demonstrations of broadcasters' regard for UGC should be a feature of all use of UGC, whether through comments accompanying its use or simple automated emails thanking contributors for their submissions.

3.3 General guidelines for soliciting UGC

While some specific guidance as to how to promote various forms of UGC is given below, there are also some general guidelines to follow.

- The focus for obtaining UGC should be on actively soliciting material rather than waiting for audiences to submit it. Suitable appeals, guidance and projects can encourage UGC that is of most value to broadcasters and can help to mitigate some of the challenges involved in using such material.
- Making UGC promotion part of the culture of a broadcaster can help to ensure that audiences become accustomed to the idea of submitting material.
- Requests for UGC should be made as specific as possible to ensure that material is more likely to be compatible with the requirements of the broadcaster. Requesting material relating to particular themes or issues that are relevant to local communities, to current or future news stories or to forthcoming programming, is often of most benefit.
- Requests for UGC should only be made when there is the capacity to deal with the material so that the expectations of contributors are not raised unfairly.
- Opportunities for audiences to contribute UGC should be permanently available.
- Broadcasters must provide straightforward and accessible ways for contributors to submit their material. This can include a simple and memorable email address or an MMS number for sending picture messages from mobile phones. Suggest to audiences that they add the email address or MMS number to their mobile phone contact numbers.
- When soliciting material, contributors should be specifically advised not to endanger themselves or take unnecessary risks.

- Contributors should be provided with links to skills advice (see later section).
- In order to facilitate checking of the authenticity and reliability of the material, contributors should be asked to supply their name, some background information and contact details with their material²⁴. It should be made clear to contributors that a mediator may call them and speak to them in person regarding the details of the material.
- Should audiences be paid for content? The idea of being compensated for contributions is generally not a primary driver of UGC submissions²⁵. It might be pertinent for broadcasters to help this remain the case by only paying for material in exceptional circumstances such as for unique or editorially important content. In most cases the person sending in material generally retains the copyright, so they are free to give or sell their material to others²⁶. In the aforementioned survey of Commonwealth broadcasters, 20% claimed to regularly pay for content, a further 13% claimed to pay for content on occasion.

3.3.1 Audience generated news content

Audience generated news content refers to all forms of UGC used in news such as breaking news stills and footage, case studies and story tip offs. It is useful to consider three different types of audience generated news content; audience generated stills and footage, audience experiences and audience generated stories²⁷.

a. Audience generated stills and footage

Audience generated stills and footage refers to all breaking news photographs and videos and is one of the most recognisable forms of UGC. It is popular amongst both audiences and journalists because of the access and immediacy it can provide²⁸.

- While audience generated stills and footage may be a particularly appealing form of UGC, this should not interfere with news value judgements and considered editorial judgements. In other words, its availability should **not** determine its use²⁹.
- Audience generated stills and footage can be seen as favouring a particular perspective on a story and an over-reliance on this material can detract from the impartiality of a news story.
- Any digital manipulation of images should be done only with the permission of the contributor and should in no way mislead audiences³⁰.
- There are particular elements of visual material which moderators should be aware of. In particular, images should not depict groups or individuals in stereotypical ways and care should be taken with the use of religious symbols and images and the depiction of tragic events³¹.

b. Audience experiences

Finding audience members with direct experience of a story and eliciting UGC from them can add real value to news items. Such audience experiences can include the firsthand accounts of bystanders to an event or reports from individuals who have been directly affected by particularly news events. Both audiences and journalists value audience experiences over audience comment³².

- Relevant audience experiences can often be found buried within collections of audience comments. In order to make identifying audience experiences easier, it may be useful to provide separate opportunities for audience comment and audience experiences.
- Carefully constructed post forms at the bottom of online stories not only allow audiences to comment but also give people with direct experience of the relevant news story the opportunity to contribute. This also enables the broadcaster to identify them³³.
- Once identified, and if appropriate, audience members with direct experiences of events can be asked, with support, to contribute further material. This can take various forms such as providing video or stills, keeping an online diary or being available for follow-up stories³⁴.
- Often broadcasters have a tendency to devote significant resources to encouraging audience comment, such as on discussion areas. While audience comments are an important way of allowing audiences to express themselves, perhaps more resources should be devoted to encouraging audience experiences because journalists and audiences particularly value this form of UGC³⁵.

c. Audience generated news stories

The audience can be an invaluable source of information in providing both new stories and new angles on existing stories. Audiences can often not only gain access that is not possible for journalists but equally importantly, they can offer perspectives which journalists may not regularly offer. The use of audience generated news stories also helps to ensure that the news remains relevant to the issues and perspectives of the audience.

- Highlighting audience involvement, particularly when they have provided leads or new angles on significant news stories, can be a valuable way of making audiences feel part of the news production process. These occasions might also be useful for making further requests for audience news stories.

3.3.2 Audience comments

Audience comments include any UGC based on audience views and opinions, such as phone ins and online debates. Audience comments are likely to be the form of UGC which broadcasters receive most and make most use of. Audience comments can be used in programmes or web pages or as a way of supporting or giving a human element to news stories³⁶.

There are advantages and disadvantages of the large quantities of audience comment that broadcasters tend to receive; while there is great value in audiences seeing their content published and having the opportunity to express their views, moderating large volumes of audience comment can be a drain on resources and too much material is of questionable editorial value.

Audience complaints and feedback are also a form of audience comments. Appropriate use of complaints and feedback can help to improve output and demonstrate to audiences that their contributions are valued.

Treatment of audience comments

- Moderators and staff can actively participate on comment sections and help to lead and facilitate discussions or direct the nature of responses. Any contributions by staff should be clearly identified as such.
- In order to prevent inappropriate audience comments, contributors can be required to register.
- Contributors should be encouraged to filter comments themselves by having the opportunity to report inappropriate contributions. Feedback from contributors can also be used to identify 'quality' comments³⁷.
- Audience comments must not be used as an indicator of audience opinion. The nature of audience comments is likely to be strongly influenced by the demographic of people who submit UGC and are likely to represent those with strong views on the subject. Audiences are aware of this and inappropriate use of audience comments may prevent others from contributing themselves³⁸.
- The live nature of most phone-in programmes means that broadcasters must pay particular attention to moderation of this genre. In order to ensure that contributors do not break the law or cause widespread offence, contributors to phone-ins should normally be called back and if necessary briefed before they go on air. All emails and texts should be read before broadcast and presenters and the production team should be adequately briefed on dealing sensitively with contributors and handling problems on air³⁹.
- Specific programming and or webpages devoted to audience complaints and feedback can help to show audience's comments are taken seriously. Suggestions and complaints should be dealt with in a transparent and sincere way as this can help to inform a strategic response to audience interests. It should be made clear when output is modified as a result of audience complaints or feedback.

Soliciting audience comments

- While repeated appeals for any and all views on an issue may initially encourage more, varied contributions, it may also give the impression that broadcasters do not care about the quality of contributions. This may discourage audience comments in the longer term.
- Instead, appeals for audience comments should be less frequent and more focussed⁴⁰. Being specific about the form and nature of the comments broadcasters require can help to solicit more suitable material. For example, audiences might be asked for details of how they might have coped with a particular event rather than simply being asked to comment on it.
- Post forms can help to structure audience comments in a way that makes audience comments easier to manage and more likely to include suitable material.
- Emails can be sent out to regular contributors to encourage audience comments or audience news material relating to particular issues or news stories. Similarly, impulses to comment on particular issues can be strengthened by adding more prominently placed 'respond now' opportunities on broadcasters' websites.

- For telephone services, such as phone-ins, calls should be priced at the lowest possible tariff and audiences should be advised clearly how much the call will cost them. Young people must be prompted to seek permission from the bill payer. Audiences will be far less likely to contribute if they have the impression that the broadcaster is attempting to make a profit from their contributions.
- In order to encourage a range of audience comments, broadcasters must ensure that they can be submitted in various forms, such as letters, texts, emails and phone calls.
- In order to increase the 'quality' of audience comments, audience should be given simple guidance on how to submit suitable comments. They should be encouraged to ensure their comments are tasteful, relevant, civil, lawful and do not include advertising or promotion⁴¹.

3.3.3 Collaborative content

Audience generated news content and audience comment usually involve little more than the 'use' of UGC after some encouragement, suggestion or facilitation by broadcasters. Collaborative content is a more intensive, targeted and engineered form of UGC. Collaborative content refers to all forms of non-news UGC created by audiences, with support from broadcasters. This includes content created in community workshops or digital storytelling projects. Collaborative content is defined by the way UGC is produced and not by the type of material that is created.

While contributors retain editorial control over their content, the involvement of the broadcaster throughout the production process means that material can be managed to ensure that it is suitable for broadcast and that it suits the needs of the broadcaster (timescale, format, production values etc.).

The experience of producing content in collaboration with a broadcaster is highly valued by the contributors who take part. It can improve their opinion of the broadcaster and the opinions of others within their community⁴². They can also pass on the skills they learn and continue to produce content after the collaboration has ended.

- One of the key advantages of collaborative content is that it gives broadcasters access to material produced by audiences who may not ordinarily submit UGC. For many marginal groups or disenfranchised individuals, collaborative content might be one of the few opportunities they have to produce UGC. Collaborative projects must work with these groups to ensure broadcaster's output reflects all sectors of society.
- Because of the higher levels of involvement from the broadcasters, producing collaborative content involves a greater commitment from broadcasters compared to encouraging other forms of UGC. A crucial way of not only helping to manage this commitment but also to produce an effective project, is to collaborate with other institutions such as universities, colleges, community media groups or local media.
- Facilitating the production of collaborative content is very different to soliciting audience generated news content or audience comment. It requires greater commitment and investment by the broadcaster and greater interaction with the audience.

3.3.4 Interactive journalism

A distinction is made between the collaborative creation of non-news content (collaborative content) and news content (interactive journalism) because the production process is usually very different. Interactive journalism usually includes a far greater number of members of the audience who all contribute to the same item(s), is almost always conducted online and is usually more of a continual process.

Interactive journalism can take many forms but usually involves audiences developing initial news stories or ideas for news features suggested by broadcasters. This is done by contributing their expertise, first-hand accounts, further research, reporting or comment. Interactive journalism often results in the production of various news articles, from a range of perspectives centred on a specific news story. The aim of interactive journalism is to improve the quality of news stories by utilising the knowledge, skills, experience and resources of the audience.

Interactive journalism is one of the least well known forms of UGC but this form of audience interaction offers the greatest potential for enabling audiences to contribute 'quality' content⁴³. Interactive journalism is highly valued by journalists who are able to make appropriate use of the skills and knowledge of the audience, the communities themselves who are empowered to use their expertise to inform news production and the wider audience who are able to access journalism of higher 'quality'. Audiences generally regard news items produced through collaborations with the audience as being more independent and authoritative.

- The nature of the online community and the relationship of trust and respect between the broadcaster and that online community are central to the success of any online collaborative journalism project. Audience members must be able to trust the broadcaster if they are to devote the time and effort to contribute to the process of news production. In order to foster this trust, interactive journalism projects must be transparent, accountable and truly collaborative. Broadcasters must be willing to respond to the criticisms of collaborators particularly since the audience members involved in interactive journalism are likely to be willing to scrutinise the actions of the broadcaster.

3.3.5 Non-news content

Non-news content refers to all UGC which does not fit into one of the previous categories. This includes material such as reviews, non-news images, recommendations etc. The most frequently submitted non-news content is non-news photographs such as images of weather or local landscapes⁴⁴.

Non-news content is valued and enjoyed by those who submit such material and often older members of the audience (in the UK at least)⁴⁵. It can provide a refreshing alternative to hard news or current affairs content and can provide programming or online content with an authentic local feel.

However, there are sections of the audience, particularly young people, who are less enthusiastic about the use of non-news content. In some contexts, non-news content may be perceived as lacking value or detracting from the value of authoritative programming. The appropriate use of

non-news content is vital to encouraging positive audience opinions of non-news content and encouraging quality material.

Treatment of non-news content

- Inappropriate use of non-news content can have the same effect on audiences as making requests too frequently for audience comment; it may give the impression that broadcasters do not care about the quality of contributions and this may discourage non-news content in the longer term.
- Non-news content should not normally be used as part of news items. Many audiences disapprove of this use.
- Providing specific areas on websites where users can either upload or send in non-news content and view the material of others is a useful way of allowing audiences to have their material published (as long as it is moderated) without it compromising other programming.
- Non-news content can be particularly useful for local websites, local radio stations or weather bulletins.

Soliciting non-news content

- Individual members of the audience will always submit non-news content to broadcasters, often in large quantities, whether it is solicited or not and significant amounts of non-news content can be of low 'quality'. Making skills guidance easily available online is one way of attempting to improve quality.

4. CONTRIBUTING CONTENT

4.1 Who contributes?

Typically only a relatively small number of individual members of the audience submit UGC and those that do so are frequently from particular sectors of society. In the UK, less than a quarter of adults have ever sent material into a news organisation and those that do contribute tend to be white, male, between 50 and 59 and in full time employment⁴⁶.

By encouraging contributions from a broader range of people broadcasters will be able to make use of more varied and unique stories and have content which better reflects their audience. This also means that a wider range of voices can be heard in public debates, a factor which is of broad benefit to society.

Those members of the audience who contribute UGC have been variously referred to as ‘users’, ‘producers’ and ‘contributors’. But just as the term ‘UGC’ masks important differences between different forms of material, so these terms mask the range of different sections of the audience who contribute UGC. While no clear typology of UGC contributors exists which is relevant in all contexts around the world, it is important for broadcasters to recognise the different skills, experience, motivations and resources that different contributors have. UGC contributors range from individuals who may have submitted one audience comment, to occasional contributors who may infrequently submit audience generated news material and collaborative content, to semi-professional producers who have sufficient resources and motivation to commit to regularly contributing different forms of UGC for use on a variety of platforms⁴⁷. An awareness of these differences should be built into any attempts to solicit or promote UGC.

4.2 Explaining audience contributions

If broadcasters are to encourage a broader range of UGC contributions from a wider sector of society, then it would be useful to understand the reasons why audiences are or are not willing to contribute. It is useful to consider three specific explanations for contributing UGC⁴⁸.

1. The digital divide and economic barriers

The ‘digital divide’ refers to the unequal access to technology which exists for different sectors of society. Those with access to technologies are those most likely to be able to submit UGC and thus to have their voices heard. Similarly, the UGC found most useful by broadcasters is often that which is produced by well educated audiences. The ‘elite’ sectors of the audience contribute more UGC because they are more likely to have the inclination and the time to do so.

Making use of material that does not necessarily require expensive equipment or high levels of education is one way of helping to tackle these issues. Indeed, ‘quality’ audio and text is often easier to produce and make use of than ‘quality’ video. Simple skills advice should be made readily available for all formats of UGC, to enable those with lower media information literacy levels to

contribute. Community workshops and camera distribution schemes offer ways in which broadcasters can help to elicit material from sectors of the audience who do not have access to certain technologies.

2. Technological skills and knowledge

Access to technology is an important determinant of the creation of UGC, but audiences also need the knowledge and skills to use technology if they are to contribute UGC. Similarly, ignorance of how to submit material to broadcasters can be one of the greatest barriers to contributing. For some audiences they may find it easier to upload their material on a personal blog or video sharing site such as YouTube or to not distribute it at all than to spend time searching for the correct email address or phone number to submit it to a broadcaster.

Creating numerous, easily available and accessible opportunities for submitting UGC and promoting those opportunities regularly and prominently is vital for encouraging UGC. Requests for UGC made on programmes should be supported by similar information on other platforms. Consistency and frequency of contact details is important. If audiences are given a range of different contact details this can lead to frustration and a sense that UGC promotion is not being taken seriously.

3. Psychological explanations

Many individual audience members contribute UGC, not because of any financial or material incentives but simply to have fun or because of a desire to share their experiences⁴⁹. By contrast, other individuals do not contribute UGC because they do not see the value in contributing, even though they might have the resources and skills to do so. These psychological barriers to contributing can take several forms.

Although all individuals potentially have something interesting to say, many simply do not want to share their views and experiences with thousands of other people. Being able to contribute material to broadcasters on the scale that exists today is a relatively new phenomenon and for many individuals it simply does not occur to them to contribute. Others may feel there are no real world consequences in contributing or that their material is unlikely to be used by the broadcaster. Finally, some individuals do not want to be associated with those who contribute UGC as they have negative attitudes towards some types of content⁵⁰.

What unites these psychological barriers is unfamiliarity with the creation and use of UGC. If the number and type of people submitting UGC is to be broadened, then broadcasters must normalise participation. This will be a long term consequence of integrating UGC use and promotion into all elements of broadcasting.

In order to ensure that audiences feel submitting material is worthwhile, broadcasters must make use of UGC across all output. There is, however, a balance to be struck between making use of significant amounts of UGC and having so much UGC in the schedule that its editorial value is reduced.

5. PROMOTING UGC AND MIL IN FORMAL AND INFORMAL EDUCATION

5.1 General guidelines

Many broadcasters have a long history of collaboration with schools, colleges and universities which have resulted in the production and broadcast of UGC. Formal and informal education has also been the most common arena for teaching MIL⁵¹. Educational institutions are therefore an obvious place for promoting both MIL and UGC. Indeed, in a recent survey of Commonwealth broadcasters, virtually all MIL projects run by broadcasters related to formal and informal education. Examples include media training schools for young people (Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria), news programmes produced and presented by school children (Fiji TV) and young people's "friends of..." groups which attend training programmes and assist in production (TV Maldives)⁵². As a result of these numerous and wide ranging MIL projects, a number of lessons may be learned by other broadcasters wishing to promote MIL and UGC in formal and informal education. A set of general guidance for broadcaster involvement in promoting MIL and UGC in formal and non-formal education is given below. This is followed by more specific guidance relating to particular issues or projects.

- Educational institutions often lack appropriate resources, specific training and institutional support in teaching MIL. If broadcasters are to be truly effective in promoting MIL and UGC in formal and informal education then their involvement must extend beyond project-specific collaborations and into assistance in providing and promoting more structural support.
- The mere involvement of broadcasters in MIL can give the field an authority and prestige that is often lacking. In many countries, MIL is neglected by policy makers and simply raising its profile would be an important contribution.
- Several important issues require consideration in running media production projects within both the formal and informal education sectors. These include: obtaining parental consent, moderating large quantities of material and creating sustainable projects. Potential areas for concern should be identified and addressed during the initial stages of project design.
- Without local support, educators have frequently relied on essentially 'western' approaches to MIL which may not be either relevant or suitable. Local broadcasters can play a vital role in developing distinctive approaches to MIL which are appropriate for the contexts in which they work⁵³.
- It is essential that partnerships between broadcasters and educational institutions are not seen merely as a form of public relations exercise on the part of the broadcaster. The educational aims of MIL projects must be strongly emphasised.
- MIL projects should not focus on the technical skills of media production to the detriment of other elements of MIL, such as critical viewing skills.
- UNESCO has long recognised the importance of MIL in formal and informal education and in 2006 UNESCO produced *Media Education: A Kit for Teachers, Students, Parents and*

*Professionals*⁵⁴ which provides a useful guide for promoting MIL inside and outside of formal educational institutions. This guide is freely available online.

5.2 Partnerships with educational institutions

Almost any broadcaster support for MIL and UGC in formal or informal education will involve partnerships with educational institutions. The nature of these partnerships can vary from collaborations on specific projects to cooperation in lobbying for policy change in the area of MIL. Partnerships with educational institutions not only reduce the resource costs associated with creating and sustaining MIL and UGC promotion schemes but they add great value to projects as broadcasters and educational institutions both offer complimentary qualities. While schools have the pedagogical skills and experience, broadcasters have greater resources and expertise in the media field. Educational institutions such as schools, colleges and universities can also take responsibility for a great deal of the management and administration of such projects.

General guidance

- Partnerships with formal educational institutions are most effective if they are sustained over a long period of time. Immediate success is neither certain or likely with a new project, and hence the expectation should not be to get it right first time. Projects inevitably take time to become established and by working together regularly, all parties will become accustomed to the expectations and demands of the project.
- Many MIL projects start through ad hoc collaborations between individual media professionals and specific educational institutions. It is important to consider whether ambitious projects spearheaded by one enthusiastic media professional can be sustained if and when that individual moves on.

Partnerships with schools

The aim of teaching MIL in schools should not be to train young people for employment in the media industries: this is something to be done in higher education. Rather, the focus should be on slowly building capacity amongst young people. If media production skills can be taught at a young age then MIL and UGC may become normalised as part of routine practice in society and the benefits for broadcasters and for society in general will be felt and sustained in the long term.

- For this reason it is important that school based projects should, whenever possible, be designed to be easily replicated across different schools throughout a country. Projects should be sustainable and not resource intensive. Most schools do not have resources to devote to extensive, 'quality' media production projects and media production in schools should not normally involve access to 'high tech' equipment.
- Using high tech equipment can also unfairly raise expectations. The principles of media production can often be learnt equally well from using a disposable camera or simply a pen and paper⁵⁵. In a recent survey of Commonwealth broadcasters, letters from individuals in the audience were judged to be the form of UGC of highest 'quality'⁵⁶.

- For school based projects it is important to keep media production activities small-scale and manageable, particularly in the early stages. Production skills can take a long time to learn and students will quickly become disillusioned if they expect to produce the sort of content they are used to seeing in the mainstream media.
- Working with schools can create vast amounts of material and managing this volume of UGC can be problematic for broadcasters. Encouraging schools to ‘broadcast’ some of the material internally will help to lessen the commitments of the broadcaster. This could take the form of school newspapers or web pages on school websites. Links can then be made between the broadcaster and the school’s content so that the broadcaster can both retain some credit for its involvement and also act as a mediator between wider audiences and young people’s content. Broadcasters should always publish or broadcast some of the material produced by students.
- Encouraging schools to broadcast or publish the material internally also helps to reduce the involvement of the broadcaster in moderating content as schools can take responsibility for the nature of the content themselves. However, guidance on keeping content appropriate and legal should still be retained at the heart of any MIL project and any material linked directly to the broadcaster should be moderated by professionals.
- Promoting MIL should not be limited to specialist media studies subjects. Media production can offer a way of learning that can be applied to all subjects and cross-curricular links should be exploited whenever possible.

Partnerships with universities and colleges

Collaborations between broadcasters and colleges or universities in promoting MIL and UGC can be particularly beneficial for both parties. Universities or colleges can often provide venues, logistical expertise and access to students and communities that broadcasters don’t have and by becoming involved in the education of university level media students, broadcasters can help to build positive relationships with the media practitioners of the future. At the same time, universities and colleges can benefit from the prestige of working with broadcasters and the many associated benefits this can bring, such as opportunities for lecturing, student placements, research opportunities etc.

Although collaborations with universities are likely to reach fewer students than collaborations with schools, the students they do reach are likely to produce content of higher ‘quality’.

- Vocational courses in colleges and universities are often accused of not equipping students with appropriate skills for future work in the media industries. Broadcasters can play a role in helping to ensure that such courses do teach these skills by providing practical experience in work-shadowing or placement schemes.
- Similarly, broadcasters can help to address the vocational ambitions of students by providing them with the opportunity to have their material broadcast or work as an intern or apprentice.
- Both universities and individual media practitioners value lectures given by practicing professionals. Such direct contributions to student’s education can help to build and

strengthen relationships between the university and the broadcaster and provide examples of practical experience to students.

5.3 Working with young people

Working with children to promote MIL can be very different to working with adults. Although young people do not have the same knowledge and experience as adults, they can have an infectious enthusiasm, particularly for media production projects, and they often offer refreshing perspectives.

Media production projects often generate the most enthusiasm and interest amongst students and at the same time can help students to learn about other aspects of MIL. However, it is often the most challenging area of MIL for teachers as it can be resource intensive, can take much longer to do and requires ceding greater control to young people.

While experiences will vary depending on the age, group size, context and culture, there are some general guidelines about working with young people⁵⁷.

Control of the process

- Promoting MIL amongst young people is about allowing them to experiment with media and communication and to express their personal experiences and views of the world. Allow children to use their own language and respect their cultural diversity. Attempts to channel the creative energies of young people too narrowly will only stifle their creativity and inhibit their learning.
- While it might be tempting to impose a rigid structure on the educational process, if the aim is to allow young people to learn about media production as part of MIL, then they must be allowed some capacity to lead the process.
- In media production projects in particular, children often learn more by working together. Group work can make media production more enjoyable for them and more manageable for the facilitator.

Adults' attitudes

- While the principle aim of any MIL project is to educate young people, children can also make adults see things differently. Any adults attending MIL education should be open to learning new ideas and ways of thinking about things that children offer.
- Children are often very aware of the attitudes and motivations of adults and will see through condescending approaches. Whilst it is important to match the scope and aims of any project to the capabilities of the young people taking part, it is also important not to over-indulge young people or over-compensate for their perceived lack of knowledge or skills.

5.4 Child protection and UGC

There are particular child protection and taste and decency issues which broadcasters and audiences must be aware of when promoting media production with children or when children appear in UGC.

It is important to have a written set of guidelines when working with young people which all parties should adhere to. Formal educational institutions often have very little knowledge of issues such as copyright and privacy and while they may be more aware of issues relating to child protection, practice may vary between different institutions.

Child protection⁵⁸

- While child protection laws and regulation vary between countries, broadcasters must always ensure that the content doesn't compromise young people's safety in any way.
- It is important for children to see their work published and to see their name alongside their work. However, for child protection reasons, it is good practice not to publish the surnames of people under 18. This is to minimise the risk of disclosing information that could enable a stranger to identify and locate a child.
- It is good practice to inform parents or guardians of the nature and purpose of a MIL project and the involvement of their children. This will not only help to gain their support but may also help to promote the value of MIL amongst parents and guardians.
- Different countries will have different legal requirements for adults working with children. Broadcasters must follow any such requirements and make educational institutions aware of this. For example, it may be necessary for staff working with children to undergo a criminal records check.
- Contact between staff and students should be conducted via the educator. Students should not ask staff for their personal contact details or provide them with their own details.

Taste and decency⁵⁹

- It is inappropriate for young people to produce UGC relating to certain subjects. As views on the suitability of different topics may vary between different educators and different institutions it would be useful for broadcasters to provide guidance or suggestions on suitable topics to be covered.
- Broadcasters and educators must be mindful of the power of the media. Any content which may communicate inappropriate information or potentially promote undesirable behaviour should be prohibited. Once again, simple guidance on the nature of material to be produced can help to avoid such issues.

Consent

- The signed consent of a parent or guardian of any child taking part in the project must be obtained. Consent should be obtained both for students creating material and for students appearing in any material.

- Gaining the consent of a parent or guardian of every young person involved in a media production project can be particularly time and resource intensive, particularly for projects which aim to promote MIL in many schools. The most practical way of dealing with this is to ensure that each educational institution takes responsibility for obtaining and keeping the consent for all of the young people in its care. The broadcaster should then be provided with a signed form from the institution stating that this consent has been gained from every participant's parents or guardians.

5.5 Teaching materials

One of the principle problems faced by MIL educators is a lack of basic equipment and resources. If an educator wants to start teaching MIL or to integrate it into an existing syllabus, they often have to create their own teaching materials from scratch which can be time consuming and costly. The involvement of broadcasters in helping to create suitable materials can be a very simple, cost-efficient way of promoting MIL. The involvement of broadcasters can also help foster goodwill between broadcasters, educators and communities. The creation of teaching materials takes place mostly in collaboration with educational institutions and specific MIL not-for-profit organisations.

Creating teaching materials

- When creating teaching materials for use in schools, teachers should usually be allowed to take the lead because they have the skills and experience to create materials that meet the educational needs of their students. At the same time, the skills and experience of broadcasters can be drawn on to enhance the 'quality', appeal and design of teaching materials. Whether by providing quotes from media professionals, simple case studies or contributing to the final design or editing of materials, a small input from broadcasters can help teachers to create professional, contemporary and attractive resources.
- One of the key constraints MIL educators suffer from is the unwillingness of broadcasters to waive copyright restrictions on their content for educational use⁶⁰. This can be achieved by retaining a distinction between 'commercial' and 'educational' use and will allow broadcast content to be seen by numerous students, as long as due credit is given to the broadcaster⁶¹.
- Teaching materials can and should be made relevant to a range of school subjects and accompanying any teaching materials should be a clear account of how they link to different syllabuses. This should include showing learning progression, relevance to specific areas of the school curriculum, specific learning outcomes and criteria and procedures for evaluation and assessment. This is an important way of helping teachers to demonstrate the value and relevance of MIL to others. Once again, the knowledge and skills of teachers themselves can be drawn on to produce this.
- It is important to remember that educators may want to use teaching materials in a variety of contexts. Many teachers will want to adapt teaching materials to suit the particular needs

of their students and the materials should allow for this. Creating flexible, 'open' resources that teachers can adjust will be far more useful than creating a prescriptive set of activities.

- The production of teaching materials is not a 'one-off' event. Once resources have been produced it is important to frequently update them to make them feel fresh and contemporary.
- Teaching materials are also a vital part of promoting MIL outside of the classroom. If broadcasters have built links with schools or teachers then it would be useful to ask them to advise on creating suitable materials for other initiatives such as community workshops.

Availability of teaching materials

- In order to make MIL teaching resources as accessible as possible, broadcasters can make them available themselves on a range of platforms.
- In cases where individual teachers have produced their own teaching materials, opportunities should be provided for them to share material. Broadcasters may be in a position to help teachers to link up and do this.

5.6 Educator training

In the research that has been conducted into the state of MIL in formal and informal education around the world, there is agreement that the most urgent need is for 'sustained, in-depth teacher training'⁶². This need for educator training is particularly relevant for teaching media production because educators often struggle to match the media skills and knowledge of their students⁶³.

While broadcasting organisations are not ideally suited to providing teacher training themselves, by working in collaboration with colleges, universities and teaching associations, there is much they can do to add value to teacher training programmes without incurring dramatic costs.

Forms of training

- Teacher training should not consist solely of classroom-based formal courses. Opportunities to work with professionals in apprenticeships, placements or work shadowing are important opportunities for providing educators hands on experience of media production.
- Ideally, educator training in MIL should be integrated at all levels of teacher training; from initial teacher training to in-service training and opportunities at Masters level.
- The provision of a range of formal courses is not always possible and so distance learning courses may be appropriate in some contexts.

Trainees

- Educators in formal and informal educational institutions should not be the only recipients of training. Individuals from broadcasters who are involved in promoting MIL and UGC, facilitators of community workshops, youth workers and even local volunteers should also attend. Training future MIL trainers is vital if MIL and UGC projects are to be made sustainable.

5.7 The role of other educational institutions

Broadcasting Authorities

While there are many examples of effective MIL support from broadcasters, such schemes often only arise out of individual initiatives or goodwill. Only by encouraging such schemes to become a systematic part of participation in the communications market place can MIL promotion be mainstreamed. Broadcasting authorities have a vital role to play in creating the right commercial environment or regulatory framework for ensuring that this takes place⁶⁴.

There are various mechanisms available to broadcasting authorities to require broadcasters to support MIL, including levies on distribution, licensing obligations and charter renewal⁶⁵. Aside from imposing requirements on broadcasters, broadcasting authorities can also be involved in promoting MIL by raising awareness, stimulating debate, funding research and fostering and creating partnerships through conferences and other forums⁶⁶.

Teaching Associations

If media information literacy is to establish itself as an important part of formal education it is crucial to have strong networks and associations of teachers involved. Such networks can provide ways of exchanging teaching material and examples of good practice and can encourage debate and the promotion of media information literacy as a subject.

Where teaching networks and associations have developed partnerships with broadcasters, successful and sustainable MIL projects have been established (for example, in New Zealand and Australia). Where these associations do not exist, broadcasters are often in an ideal position to facilitate the creation of such associations. If broadcasters have been able to identify and build links with relevant educators, then they simply need to put them in touch with each other.

6. PROMOTING MIL AND UGC IN COMMUNITIES

6.1 Partnerships with Community Media and Other Local Organisations

MIL promotion and media production in particular are often already taking place in local communities outside of formal and informal education. In developed countries, it is often cultural centres, film agencies and specific MIL not-for-profit organisations (NGOs) which support media production projects⁶⁷. In developing countries, media production is more likely to take place via community media and community media centres⁶⁸.

In whatever context local MIL promotion takes place, partnerships between broadcasters and local organisations are an ideal way of creating effective, sustainable MIL projects. The most successful MIL projects in local communities are those which tap into the skills and experiences of local people and which manage to create content which is appropriate to and for the local population⁶⁹. Community media and other local organisations have the knowledge of the MIL needs of local population and the access to them which are vital in achieving this. At the same time, their capacity to promote MIL is often limited by their resources and specific expertise but this can often be managed by collaborations with broadcasters.

Partnerships between broadcasters and local organisations may be broad and open-ended offering little more than information exchange, or they can take the form of formal, agreements involving the joint management and implementation of various MIL projects⁷⁰.

Partnerships between broadcasters and local organisations are vital for ensuring that MIL projects are sustainable. If and when broadcasters withdraw their support, the benefits of MIL projects can be maintained in the longer term if community media or other local organisations are able to continue running MIL projects.

Sharing content

- Both national broadcasters and community media can make use of any UGC produced in MIL projects. If the community media take responsibility for the safety and legality of the content, the broadcaster can transfer some of its responsibility to moderate content. At the same time, credit can be given to the broadcaster through appropriate recognition and broadcasters can showcase some of the best content.
- Local media are often looking for appropriate media content and so partnerships with national broadcasters can also help to meet this need and to bring a broadcaster's content to the widest possible audiences⁷¹. Similarly, it can be of great benefit to community media and other local organisations if local radio stations run by national broadcasters can air programmes and material produced by them⁷². This is particularly important in countries where broadcasting laws do not yet permit community radio to go on air.

Scale

- Building partnerships can be time consuming and often speculative for local organisations, with little time or resources to spare. At the start of any collaboration or partnership it is important to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of each partner and the aims, management and nature of any partnership are clearly understood by all parties⁷³. What may be a relatively small-scale, trial project to a national broadcaster may be a relatively large, significant project for a community media organisation.

6.2 Camera distribution projects

One of the main barriers for individual members of the audience to contributing UGC is a lack of access to appropriate technology. While broadcasters do not have the capacity to address the digital divide that exists in all societies, they can help to temporarily overcome problems of access by providing specific individuals or groups of individuals with the resources they need to create UGC. One of the most effective ways of achieving this is through camera distribution projects.

A camera distribution project is any project which involves lending cameras to individual members of the audience in order for them to create their own UGC. These projects can be used to elicit material on a range of topics or issues. Contributors can be given specific events to record or given themes or topics to base their material around. They may also be given entirely free reign to produce material on a subject of their own choosing.

Camera distribution projects have clear benefits for both audiences and broadcasters. They can enable otherwise disenfranchised audiences to create their own material and to tell their own stories and at the same time, if used strategically, can enable broadcasters to obtain unique, salient and relevant material.

Cameras

- The type of camera distributed depends on the type of material broadcasters wish to elicit. Where broadcasters want to encourage relatively large numbers of people to document personal stories or where everyday experiences and technical quality are not as important, then disposable cameras or cheaper digital cameras might be the most appropriate. By contrast, camera distribution projects which seek to produce broadcast quality material about specific events may require more expensive equipment to be used.
- Digital cameras are useful for allowing users to take numerous, high resolution photos and to delete unwanted material, but disposable cameras can also have an important role to play in camera distribution projects. They are far cheaper and so can be distributed to a greater number of contributors, it matters less if they are broken or not returned, they require less technical knowledge and so may be more appropriate for use by some audiences and the images can not be deleted so contributors may be inclined to focus on getting fewer images of higher quality.

Practicalities

- The management of cameras and other resources such as sound recording equipment and laptop computers can take place either via a central office or via numerous freelance or part-time local producers. Journalists may also be encouraged to take resources with them when reporting a story in case an opportunity arises to ask relevant individuals to produce their own material.
- Cameras can be loaned out to contributors for varying periods of time. They can be given on long term loan so that individuals can record events over a period of time or to enable contributors to follow developments in a process. They can also be loaned on a short term basis to allow contributors to create material relating to a specific event or story. The length of the equipment loan period should be clearly defined and arrangement should be made for its return or collection.

Recruitment

- The way in which individuals are recruited to take part in camera distribution projects also depends on the nature of material broadcasters wish to encourage. For larger scale, less focussed project, generic promotion and advertising for contributors might be most appropriate but for soliciting specific items or commissioned pieces broadcasters may want to directly approach individuals who have been in the news or who live in particular communities.

Quality

- Simple training or advice in the use of the equipment and on how to tell a good story should be a part of any camera distribution project. It may also be useful to ensure that users have a clear sense of the material they need to produce before they commence filming.
- In most cases the editing of material should be done by the broadcaster as this can be a time consuming process for amateurs. This also ensures a level of quality.

Use of material

- Before being receiving any equipment, contributors should be asked to sign a contract which confirms that they retain the copyright of any material they produce but that the broadcaster who supplied the resources is able to make responsible use of the material.
- The material created through camera distribution projects can be used to form a project in itself, or it can be created via commissions from programmes wishing to elicit material to support their output. For example, camera distribution projects are a useful way of soliciting additional material to put on specific programme websites.

6.3 Community workshops

Media production workshops in local communities are an effective way of providing targeted assistance to specific communities by giving local people the opportunity to create their own content. The content produced in media production workshops often has a distinct, local feel which should form an important part of the diversity of broadcaster's output. Running community media workshops is also a useful way of working with potentially 'hard to reach' audiences.

Community workshops can be used as a vehicle for enabling audiences to produce any form of UGC. Providing the right advice and support in these workshops can help contributors to get the most out of the experience and can help to ensure that they create 'quality' content.

Community workshops can be weeklong events with large groups of contributors being helped to create personal stories of several minutes in length. Equally, they can involve a small number of hour long sessions with small groups of people, designed to create simple mini-reports on news events.

Practicalities

- Community media workshops can take place in a range of venues, including schools, village halls, community centres, libraries, local radio stations, internet cafes or even some religious buildings. The venue must be large enough, secure, accessible and have sufficient access to mains power. It will also be useful to identify a quiet room that can be used for recording audio⁷⁴.
- The possibility of having material broadcast is important for recruitment and for ensuring contributors' commitment to the project. The material created in these workshops remains the intellectual property of the individuals who created it. On occasion some contributors may later decide they do not want their material to be broadcast. This is their right and it must be respected.
- Community media workshops should be fun and creative and not overly prescriptive or directed. Broadcasters will be inclined to set their own agenda of the topics they would like contributors to cover. While this is important for ensuring appropriate material is created, imposing a narrow set of instructions can be extremely limiting for contributors, particularly since many of them will not be used to media production. The real value of community workshops is often in providing contributors with the space to tell their stories or document events for themselves. If there is a particularly salient issue in a community, it is likely to emerge in the stories the local people tell, but perhaps not in the ways the broadcaster would have told it.
- Running workshops in groups has several advantages. A group of contributors can create a network of ideas, support and advice (relating both to content and technical skills) which can relieve some of the burden on the facilitator. Having company also maximises the opportunities for having fun and can build a sense of collective achievement⁷⁵.
- The style, aims and organisation of workshops should be managed to suit the needs of the contributors and not the organisers.

Recruitment

- While contributors can gain a great deal from taking part in community workshops, often the greatest challenge is recruitment. Alongside the psychological barriers to creating UGC outlined in a previous section, local people may be reluctant to participate at first because involvement in a community workshop is unpaid, it involves a commitment of time and they may be unsure of the requirements and purpose of the workshop. An effective way of recruiting local people is to present material produced in previous workshops at a local meeting.
- Recruitment can also be made easier by using established groups such as youth groups.

Sustainability

- While community workshops are an excellent way of promoting both MIL amongst small groups of people and providing UGC for broadcasters, if they are designed to be sustainable then they can be of longer term benefit to both broadcasters and communities.
- Broadcasters should move away from large-scale, 'one-off' experiences which may achieve a high profile and produce a great deal of material but are likely to be relatively resource intensive and not sustainable. Community workshops should be treated as part of a 'routine' rather than a special event⁷⁶.
- In order to promote sustainability there should be frequent workshops for training the trainers where skills are transferred to local trainers, staff and individuals from other organisations or even volunteers from the local community.
- The scale, cost and accessibility of the resources needed to take part should be kept as low as possible. This will not only make it cheaper for the broadcasters initially but will help to ensure that activities continue if and when broadcaster input ceases. Using free, web-based editing tools from the start means contributors will be able to create further material themselves in the future without the input of the broadcaster.
- It is important that the partnering broadcast organisation retains links with the project and builds a relationship with local communities so that future content that is produced continues to be available to them rather than their competitors.

6.4 Digital storytelling

A digital story is a short, broadcast-quality personal story created by an individual member of the audience. Digital stories offer broadcasters a new form of content with a local feel and relevance that broadcasters can find hard to produce themselves. Digital storytelling allows contributors the chance to create their own stories about issues which are important to them. They also give individuals a way into media production which may lead onto further contributions.

Digital stories are relatively easy for contributors to create, even for those with little or no knowledge or skills of media production.

These personal stories can make use of audio, image and sometimes video. The most effective and resource efficient digital stories are often short mini-movies containing a small selection of personal photographs accompanied by a spoken narrative⁷⁷. Digital stories can also work well for radio. The three main elements of a digital storytelling project are a story, stills and accompanying audio.

Story

- Contributors should be allowed to tell whatever stories they wish to tell, as long as the content remains appropriate and legal. Stories can range from a reflection on their personal circumstances to an account of their involvement in a contemporary local or national event. The strength of digital stories is in their diversity and authenticity.
- For longer, large scale digital storytelling projects, a 'story circle' is a useful way of inspiring ideas by sharing memories, looking at old photos, playing memory games etc.. Showing examples of previous digital stories can also inspire ideas. If possible, contributors should be briefed in advance about the process so they have the chance to consider what story they might want to tell.
- If the aim of the digital storytelling project is to inspire contemporary stories rather than reflective ones then contributors can be given a particular theme to base stories on at the start of the process.

Stills

- Stills often provide the most suitable visual material for digital stories as video requires more expensive equipment and greater technical skills to create and edit effectively.
- There are a range of different ways of capturing and incorporating stills into digital stories. Contributors can be asked to bring images with them or be given the time and capacity to take new ones. Contemporary images can be taken using disposable cameras, mobile phones or digital cameras. Stills can be used either at the start of a project as inspiration for stories or towards the end of the project to illustrate the stories contributors wish to tell.
- Once stills have been either uploaded directly onto a computer or scanned in, editing software can be used to synchronise the images with audio recordings of the story.

Audio

- The audio for digital stories can be created in one of two ways. Firstly, contributors can be asked to take the time to write their own scripts. Making a digital story for the first time often requires learning not just new technical skills but storytelling skills as well. Many contributors may find this particularly difficult and examples of previous digital stories should be easily available to serve as examples of good practice. Strict word limits are useful for limiting the scope and length of a digital story. A story lasting two minutes should have a script of no more than 250 or 300 words. Once the script has been written it can be spoken by the contributor and recorded.
- Secondly, contributors can simply be invited to talk about an issue or an image and have their responses recorded. This approach can be useful for capturing the emotions or

intensity of a story or for those who do not have the time or the skills to write their own scripts. However, the editing processes will take longer.

Practicalities

- Community workshops are a particularly effective way of facilitating the creation of digital stories because creating a digital story requires contributors to commit the time to learning various new skills and they will need advice and guidance. Longer workshops of several days in length can help relatively large groups of contributors to create digital stories of several minutes in length, while smaller-scale workshops, such as a series of hour long sessions, can be more appropriate to contributors with little free time.
- Digital storytelling projects should be run in collaboration with local organisations wherever possible.
- Ideally, each contributor should have access to a computer and should be encouraged to edit their own stories using simple editing software. Where this is not possible or practical, the facilitator of the project should take responsibility for editing the final material. In this case the editing should be done in collaboration with the contributors who must have the final 'sign off'. The contributor must have control and ownership over the story at all times.

Quality

- Most of the contributors will not have created content in this way before. Many will not know how to begin to structure their stories or create material for it without clear guidance. Providing a proven 'media form' to follow is crucial in encouraging the creation of broadcast quality content. A media form is an outline or structure which specifies the length and nature of the digital story. For example, contributors could be asked to produce a 2 minute, 250 word story comprising of audio and a certain number of still. The media form not only gives guidance for contributors on what is required but also provides a proven formula for creating an effective, 'quality' digital story⁷⁸. The use of media forms also enables broadcasters to plan for the how the material might be published or broadcast.

Sustainability and recruitment

- Digital storytelling projects can be made more sustainable and accessible by reducing the resources contributors need to take part. Offer media forms which take less time and resources to create, make greater use of individual's existing image archives or organise sessions in places where individuals already gather.
- Building up an archive of material is important for attracting partners and funding and for recruitment. Pilot projects can be useful for gaining such material and for developing and experimenting with different media forms.

6.5 Online interactive journalism projects

Interactive journalism takes place almost exclusively online. It can be conducted either through the use of Web 2.0 technologies such as 'wiki software' which allows the easy creation and editing of any number of interlinked web pages⁷⁹ or through a number of interlinked personal blogs through which a news story is built.

In practice, online interactive journalism projects can take many different forms including: presenting draft news items to online communities who then help to develop the story, inviting online communities of experts to comment on particular issues or inviting ideas for current affairs programme content regarding issues that are currently under-reported. The material used in interactive journalism can include not just text based contributions but videos, audio and stills as well.

Building an online community

- Online communities can be set up either through on-air appeals or by soliciting membership via the websites of various programmes. Alternatively, broadcasters can tap into existing communities such as university networks or networks of individuals involved in other UGC and MIL projects.
- Maintaining a simple, searchable web-based database of all the members of the online community is a useful way of helping to manage a community. Requiring members to register allows the broadcaster to identify specific areas of expertise amongst the community.

Promoting 'quality'

- Depending on the nature of the project and its intended use, it may be pertinent to focus on building collaborations with specific expert communities rather than with any and all members of the audience. This method of recruitment can take more time but it will allow broadcasters to be more specific in their use of interactive journalism and should produce more 'quality' contributions.
- Monitoring the accuracy and suitability of content is vital in projects which involve the input of a number of different individuals. Maintaining an active editorial presence not only signals regard for the project but will make the moderation of content a regular and more acceptable part of the collaboration⁸⁰.
- Reserving some editorial control is also important for maintaining aesthetic 'quality' as multiple contributions to any one news item can disrupt the narrative of a piece.
- Broadcasters should be mindful that some news stories might not be appropriate to produce in collaboration with the audience if they involve sensitive or secret information.

Forms of collaboration

- Interactive journalism can involve not only enabling audiences to determine the nature of the content but also to determine what has news value⁸¹. Feedback mechanisms such as

ratings or voting systems can help journalists to determine which news stories are important amongst particular online communities.

- Established and mature online collaborative communities may provide a useful source of material for non-news and current affairs programming.
- There are several other ways of integrating collaboration into news production; amateur blog posts can be used to complement reporting, links to relevant online material created by audiences can be added within online news stories and audience blogs can be monitored for useful story ideas⁸².

7. SKILLS ADVICE

7.1 Introduction

However MIL and UGC is promoted, in order to improve the 'quality' of content it is important to always provide contributors with guidance on how to use relevant technology and how to keep content appropriate and legal. While more specific, tailored advice can be given to contributors in community workshops, providing simple, generic advice online or on request will enable audiences to teach themselves some of the basic principles of producing 'quality' UGC.

Every broadcasting organisation should create guidance that relates specifically to their organisation and the needs of their audience. Guidelines should be written in a clear, accessible manner and should be piloted to ensure that they make sense to people with no experience of media production and those who are not familiar with technical language.

What follows is a series of suggestions which will be useful to consider when creating such guidelines.

7.2 Taking (digital) photos

Stills are already a very popular form of audience generated news content, collaborative content and non-news content and the growing availability of digital cameras and integrated cameras in mobile phones can only lead to an increase in the amount of stills being submitted to broadcasters. When individual audience members take images of breaking news events, there is often little broadcasters can do to suggest improvements in 'quality'. But when stills are taken for non-news content in community workshops, digital storytelling projects or camera distribution projects there are some simple pieces of advice which can have a dramatic effect on quality⁸³.

- Remind contributors never to put themselves in any danger when taking a photograph.
- While digital cameras enable anyone to create sharp, well exposed images, as long as the automatic focus is used, they can not compose shots. Contributors need to be encouraged to think about the framing of their shots. If images are to be published online then contributors should be encouraged to make sure that the subject fills most of the frame.
- Contributors should be encouraged to take stills in natural daylight and be encouraged to think about where light is falling. As the use of the flash can create harsh shadows, it should only be used when necessary to lighten subjects in shadow.
- The instinct of most amateurs is to take photos from eye level. Encourage contributors to consider kneeling down or to find a higher position in order to take shots from different angles.
- It is good practice to ensure that contributors have the written permission of anyone appearing in their images before submitting them.
- When submitting images, contributors should be encouraged to attach captions. While these might not always be used they will help to provide a context and often further meaning to images. A description of who or what is being shot, where, why and when is

useful along with the thoughts or feelings of the contributor when they took the image or when they look back at it⁸⁴.

- The use of a tripod is recommended for reducing camera shake. Where this is not possible, contributors should be encouraged to consider leaning a camera against a wall or resting it on something flat.
- Digital cameras can be extremely useful for allowing contributors to take numerous, high resolution photos, which can be easily edited and shared. Indeed, contributors should be encouraged to take a variety of images of their subject in order to capture different elements of it and so that the better ones can be chosen later. However, quality should not be sacrificed for quantity. Contributors should be encouraged to plan the images they wish to take before they pick up the camera.

7.3 Filming skills

The opportunity for audiences to create video is also increasing as video cameras are becoming cheaper and of a higher technical standard and more mobile phones have inbuilt video cameras. However, filming 'quality' video can be extremely difficult⁸⁵.

- Remind contributors never to put themselves in any danger when filming video.
- It is advisable to encourage contributors to use static shots to reduce camera shake. When filming surroundings, for example, rather than panning around, surroundings can be broken up into a series of static shots. Similarly, contributors should be encouraged to hold most shots for at least five seconds.
- While the zoom function is often appealing to contributors, they are best advised not to use it during filming.
- Contributors should be reminded that filming does not have to be recorded in one continuous take but considered in different sequences which can be edited later.
- Appropriate lighting is an element of filming often neglected by amateurs. Contributors should be made aware of the basic principles of lighting a shot, such as making sure that light falls on the subject rather than the camera lens.
- Pieces to camera are frequently used in UGC. As talking directly to a camera can often produce a rather uninteresting shot, contributors might be advised to be doing something whilst talking to make it visually more interesting.

7.4 Audio and voice recording

While voice and other audio recordings are obviously a vital part of radio content, contributors should be made equally aware of the value of audio in video content or as an overlay to a series of stills⁸⁶.

- Built in microphones rarely produce the best quality audio recordings and are not usually capable of picking up sound from far away. Where possible it is best to advise contributors

to use an external directional microphone. Even relatively cheap external microphones can significantly improve sound quality.

- The specific audio that a contributor is trying to record may be easily swamped by background sounds, particularly if using a built in microphone is the only option available. Contributors should be mindful of this when considering the choice of location or time of day to make recordings.
- Those whose voices are being recorded should be encouraged not to 'perform' or to adapt their voice to fit a perceived convention but to speak as they would in ordinary conversation. One of the greatest values of UGC is that it is authentic and different to conventional broadcast output.
- Encouraging contributors to create their own music or sound effects can be a useful way of helping them to avoid using copyrighted commercial music. Even simple effects such as humming or whistling can add significantly to UGC. However, music should compliment content and not interrupt or distract attention from the central narrative or theme.
- When read aloud the written word can sometimes sound false or forced. If material is scripted, sentences should be written as they would be spoken in a normal conversation.

7.5 Keeping content appropriate and legal

No matter how good the technical, storytelling or editorial 'quality' of UGC, if it includes material which breaches copyright, breaks the law, contains inappropriate material or which compromises the safety of contributors then it can not be used by broadcasters. Emphasising this point when soliciting UGC is a useful way of encouraging contributors to take these issues into account when creating material. The guidelines broadcasters provide on issues of legality must be particularly clear and straightforward to follow as such issues are complex and may create barriers to audience participation⁸⁷.

- **Copyright:** Contributors of UGC should avoid using other people's work such as commercial music, photos, videos, brands or even quotes. Instead, they should use or create their own material.
- **Defamation:** Contributors should not include any material which might damage someone's reputation. When creating audience generated news material contributors should stick to facts and avoid opinion or speculation.
- **Crime:** Reporting crime stories is a sensitive issue and laws surrounding what can and can not be reported are often complex and confusing. It may be pertinent to recommend that contributors do not report on crime stories.
- **Privacy:** Material should not infringe on the privacy of individuals. When filming or taking photographs in a public place, contributors should make their identity and intentions known. If people do not wish to be filmed then contributors must respect this.

- **Child protection and taste and decency:** Content should never compromise young people's safety in any way and contributors should not report on issues which make people feel unnecessarily uncomfortable. These issues are dealt with in more detail in the section on 'promoting MIL and UGC in formal and informal education'.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORK IN THIS FIELD

Little has been written previously which addresses the promotion of both UGC and MIL simultaneously, although a substantial body of literature exists on these subjects as separate fields. Suggestions of some of the more relevant references are given below.

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