

Guide to the production of web contents for the documentary Solidarios (2nd Season)

Note: This document is an edited version of a guide to the production of web contents for the documentary Solidarios. The original guide was elaborated in September 2014 by Prof. Samuel Negrodo for the students of the Digital Media Publishing course (degree in journalism, University of Navarra). The document provides the context of the product and delves into the recommendations about the content and the characteristics of what students should hand in. Teachers from other institutions can bear in mind some of these ideas in order to transpose this experience to similar projects, exercises and assignments.

The project:

The web documentary Solidarios (<https://solidariosdoc.wordpress.com>) is composed by stories of people that get together to improve others' lives, and of people that get their lives changed with the help of others. Starting from their testimony, we get in-depth into various realities of the Navarran society, showing data, images, new cases, and ways to get involved. This is a web documentary elaborated by the fourth-year students of Journalism (and the fifth-year students of double degrees with journalism) of the Faculty of Communication at the University of Navarra. After the launch of the first season with the 2014 class (nine chapters and an extra topic were produced between September and November 2013), Solidarios will have a second season in the fall of 2014 with the 2015 class of journalism and the double degrees journalism students.

This project is coordinated by the teachers of the courses, Television Production (in 2013-2014 nine teams produced the videos that are integrated in the first nine chapters of the documentary), and Digital Media Publishing (in which almost twenty students simultaneously developed the interactive contents and an extra topic). One of the innovations of this year will be to have interactive versions, 'clickable' videos, in which extra contents will be linked to specific segments of each chapter of the documentary series.

This guide pursues to help the coordination of Solidarios as a web documentary that combines: (1) a solid, carefully designed and homogeneous audiovisual format in its chapters, and (2) interactive extensions, developed in different formats, which complement, contextualize and provide an added value. Although teachers insist on the value of a coordinated project, the decision to elaborate extra contents is up to each student. However, it is recommended that the students of the Television Production group coordinate among themselves and divide the website work in order to make sure that in each group there is a reasonable number of students (1-3) that produce web contents related to the organization or situation they are reporting about.

Recommendations about content:

Solidarios' videos and audiovisual documentaries in general tend to approach social reality through experiences and specific cases. The web platform allows us to propose other approaches to the covered topic and to get in deep into the causes and the consequences, the history, the context, the geographical and socio-demographic distribution or the social impact. It allows the user to go from spectator to participant.

Each student and each group can freely choose the genres, formats, and treatments that they consider most convenient, bearing in mind the topic, the organization, the access to the personal and documental sources, and their own capabilities (those that they already have, plus those that they want to develop).

Recommendations about content:

Here are some possibilities:

- **Narrative photo galleries.** Stories narrated and realities pictured through a careful selection of images. They should have the required quality to work for themselves and should include footers that do not only describe what the image shows.
- **Additional or extended self-produced videos.** Those videos will usually not be interviews, but activities, visits, alternative treatments to the topic approached in the documentary. Valid modalities include mini-videos, video-blogs with each one of the protagonists, and other alternative formats.
- **External videos and documents.** Those materials, which are very important for documentation can be embedded in a new post.
- **Statistical graphics.** Each story is unique, but it is part of a broader reality. To explain social reality implies going beyond the anecdote and explain the wider context. It is recommended that students follow the three usual steps of data journalism. Graphics generated with Google spreadsheets are also recommended, given the possibility to embed them interactive way.
- **Chronologies.** They allow presentation of milestones or remarkable facts in an ordered way. Before using any visualization tool, it should be checked beforehand if they can be embedded on WordPress without problems.
- **Texts.** We will try not to circumscribe ourselves to the classical genres and we will think about texts that enhance and complement the video. It can be an expositive report with multiple links, a post with a more personal tone, an authors' piece (analysis, comment, opinion), a profile or a description of a place, to list a few.

Large audio and video interviews, with scarce or no editing, are discouraged. The same information can be provided in a more efficient and economic way through an interview in text, adequately edited, and with a good photograph.

What should be handed in?

The students that devote the final project of the course to the web documentary should bear in mind, along with the general requisites, the following aspects:

1) A final post should be published (not a WordPress page) within a standard format (not a format for a video post or a mini-post), in which the video is inserted and linked to the extras. It is recommended that this post includes an initial paragraph of one line, simply with the word VIDEO (which will be substituted for the video to be broadcasted once it is uploaded to the Producción Televisiva YouTube channel) and a list of bullet points with the extras developed by students. Extra content should be promoted or described with a sentence of one line maximum with no full stop. It should also include a link applied to some words (not to all the sentence), which can be opened in the same window (you should not indicate target=_blank or similar).

2) An attractive photograph, which is representative of the video should be provided, preferably a close shot or similar. The ratio should be, compulsorily, 16:9 (standard panoramic format). It is suggested that the image has the dimensions of 1280 pixels of width x 720 pixels of height. Badly lighted, blurred, or jittered screenshots should be avoided in case the image is a capture. If it is a still photograph it is suggested that the lighting is natural, that flash is not perceived and that, along with recognizable subjects, it features an interesting background or depth of field. Students should upload this photograph as a highlighted image in the video entry indicated in point 1.

3) One of the requisites for all the final projects of the Digital Media Publishing course is the inclusion of a photo gallery. Photographs can be made by students or can be provided by the organization or the source. The modality of mosaic (not square mosaics) will be employed.

4) Each group of practical work of the Television Production course will provide the teacher of the Digital Media Publishing course with the final editing script. Optionally, one or various students can hand in as part of their final project of Digital Media Publishing a script of interactive video, in which the editing script also includes a column in the right with the "In" and "Out" times of the texts, embedded elements or links to extra content.

What should be handed in?

5) Students should be careful with the orthographic, grammatical, and expressive **correction** of the contents they develop, as those aspects can represent up to 30% of the mark of the final project of the course. Students should modify all the aspects that teachers indicate to them as part of the correction of their final project.

More recommendations:

- Headings will be informative, brief, and concise. Sentences with a subject and a verb are appreciated. If it does not disturb the identification of the topic of the post, questions or omitted verbs can be accepted.
- Every post, although it only consists of a photo gallery, a graphic, or a chronology, should include a lead of 3-5 lines that synthesizes the information that it provides (if possible, highlighting specific data).
- All the photographs and videos should include their footers featuring the credits, as it is essential to identify the author or authors of the materials.
- Bear in mind the keywords when publishing the information. They are the most common terms that a user can employ to refer to the reality that we are reporting about.