

# Ten Actions that Lead to a Better Online Newsroom

In an age when the next communications crisis could strike at any time without warning, while traditional media channels shrink and new online channels emerge continually, upgrading your organization's Online Newsroom should be high on the list of new goals. Here's why:

***Your online newsroom is your home - make it a place people will be able to find, hear about, and come back to visit.***

The media relations paradigm has shifted. Journalists source their information more and more frequently via the web and less by direct contact from a media relations representative. Virtually all media is working online and many outlets are exclusively publishing online. PR is measured less by clips and more by web traffic and sales. Social media and search engines drive far more eyeballs than traditional media on a daily basis. The audience now controls the direction of the story.

Your online newsroom is your home and you want it to be in order when people come to visit. That means if you want people to visit your newsroom on a regular basis, you need to be a gracious host and enable your visitors to tell your story across their neighborhood as well. To accomplish this, you want your content to be searchable, sortable and sharable.

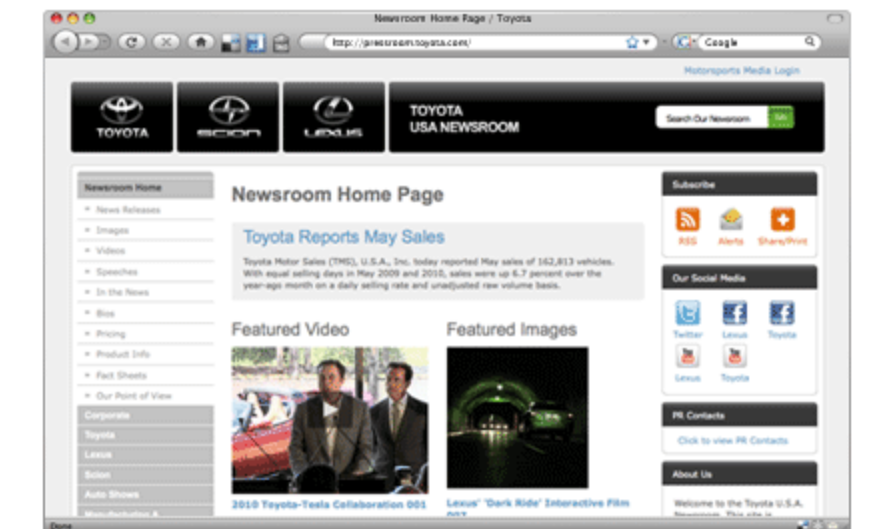
Here is iPressroom's recommended list of action items to help you evolve your online communications capabilities:

**1** Does your newsroom **spread frequent, authentic, relevant and engaging content**? Or, does it only serve up press releases without much else?

We've come to find that content is best digested when it's updated frequently, can be seen as relevant and authentic, and engages the audience while maintaining the highest possible level of professionalism.

### *Recommended Action*

Increase the frequency of the content you put out with a clear online publishing strategy. Go beyond "hard news" and identify content relevant to your business and communications goals that engage your newsroom audience. Look for "soft news" opportunities or post content in other formats - such as blog posts, infographics, audio or video content - that leverage existing resources and company events in order to create a steady stream content. Make it a goal to increase the volume of content you are currently producing and create what iPressroom calls F.A.R.E (Frequent, Authentic, Relevant and Engaging) content - or pay the price.



[Toyota Newsroom](http://pressroom.toyota.com/)

## 2 Does your newsroom **consider all of the various audiences (journalists, consumers, investors, shareholders, etc.)** that might visit your home? Or, are you thinking mainstream media only?

Today is a search-driven content universe and Google delivers content to everyone. Ensure your newsroom content is diverse and relevant to all of your site's potential visitors.

### *Recommended Action*

Your newsroom is no longer just about the media. Create a newsroom or media center with content categories that provide valuable content to each visitor from journalists to consumers to investors. Make sure you create content for different types of journalists (or non-traditional media, such as bloggers and podcasters). A mainstream journalist will likely be interested in very different content and digital assets than a blogger or podcaster. Consider creating content that might appeal to each group, utilizes validated search terms (search phrases that are frequently searched by your preferred visitors), and is presented in the form and format that enables multiple uses (from print ready photos and broadcast quality video to embeddable flash video players and widgets).



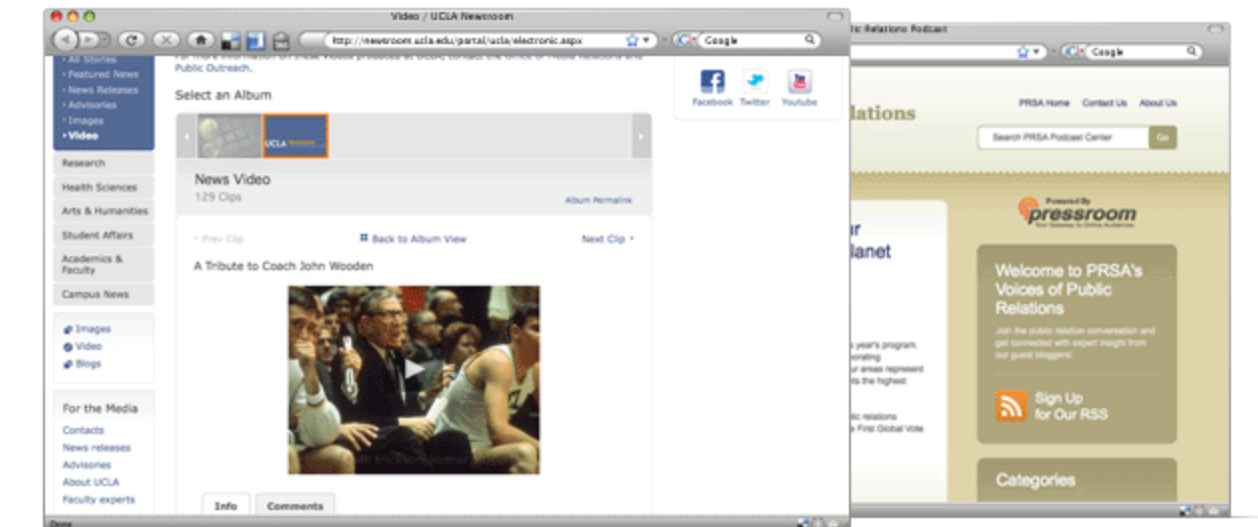
[Xerox Newsroom](#)

**3** Does your newsroom **offer content in all of the various forms expected today** (e.g.; text, photos, video, audio, pdf, blogs, podcasts, news feeds, etc.)? Or, do you mostly have press releases?

It is important to understand how your audience digests online information and how to create the various content types.

### *Recommended Action*

While Press releases are important, they are only one piece of the pie. Create charts, infographics, photo opps, audio and video content that engages your newsroom visitors. Find ways to use content that you already have, re-package content already produced, or re-broadcast content distributed through another channel (such as a live event presentation).



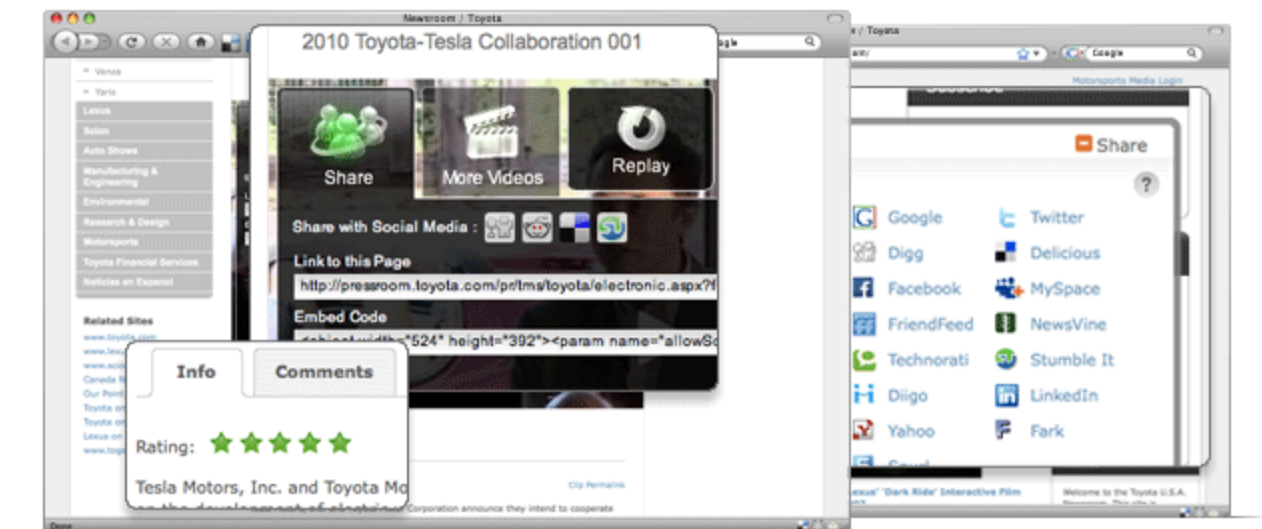
[UCLA Newsroom](#), [PRSA's Voices of Public Relations Podcast](#)

**4** Does your newsroom **enable visitors to tell others, share, discuss** and even use some of your newsroom content to spread the word to others for you? Or, can site visitors just print information?

Social media is now an integral component of driving traffic to your site, distributing information about your company, improving customer support and client relations, and increasing your search engine position.

### *Recommended Action*

Your newsroom is no longer just about the media. It is about *social media*. Ensure you have current social media tools, links, and sharing options optimized for your content distribution.

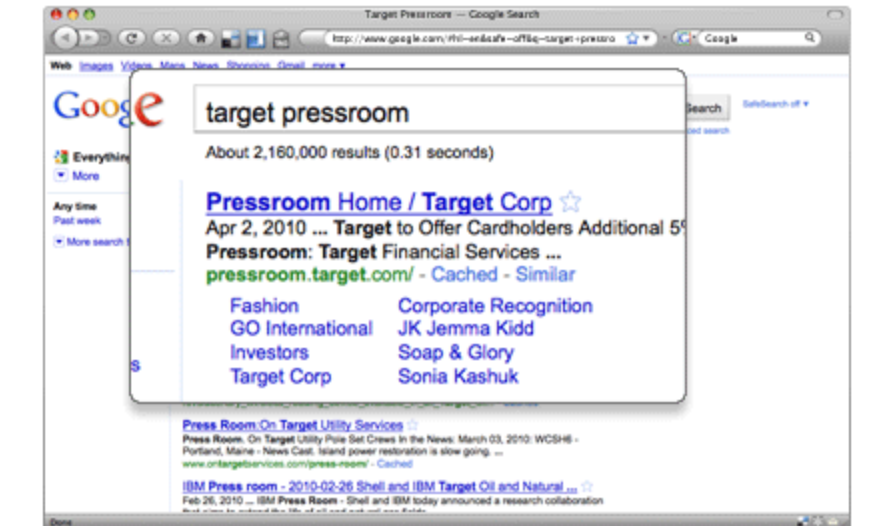


[Toyota Newsroom](#)

**5** Does your newsroom **allow search engines to easily find your site, then tell others effectively about who you are** and what you are doing? Or, are you pretty low in the rankings for most of your main search terms?

### *Recommended Action*

Search engines love websites that are updated frequently with relevant and fresh content. Ensure your newsroom is search-engine optimized with the appropriate site architecture, HTML coding, keyword density and targeted inbound links from quality sources.



**6** Does your newsroom **utilize modern web design principals and best practices** that allow people to easily navigate your newsroom and search for information? Or, does your newsroom only feature press releases and make it difficult for visitors to find what they need?

### *Recommended Action*

Overall, you want to have a clear, clean and consistent website design, with easy accessibility and functional navigation. You do not want your newsroom to look cluttered or unorganized. Create a layout that is consistent from page to page with content displayed in an easy-to-use manner. Maximize layout consistency in color, font, and functionality with CSS in a template format while deploying a Content Management System to prioritize and update content on a frequent basis. Prioritize content importance and visibility with a well-thought-out navigation system and breadcrumbs that bring you back to the Home page.



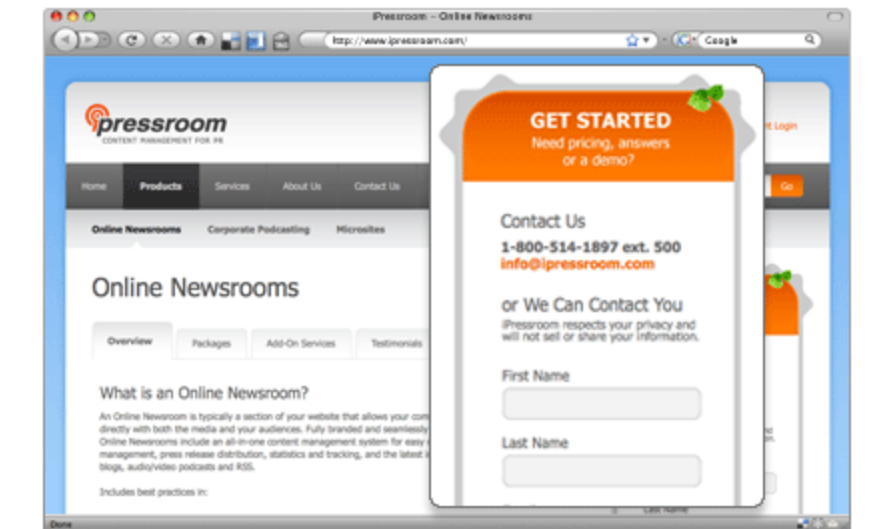
[UCLA Today Newsroom](#)

7

Does your newsroom prominently **refer traffic back to your main site** and encourage people to take immediate action to connect with your PR team and your company? Or, does it only display content without a face or user interaction?

### *Recommended Action*

An effective online newsroom asks visitors to go deeper into the site with additional products, services, organizations, and background information for them to review, ultimately gaining greater knowledge and interest in your company. You should allow people to post a positive comment about a product or service, buy a featured product, make a donation to your company's philanthropy, obtain investment information, sign-up for your blog or online newsletter, or simply refer a friend to your newsroom. If presented in a easy-to-use format, you've created a positive experience for your customers or interested audiences.



[iPressroom](http://www.ipressroom.com)

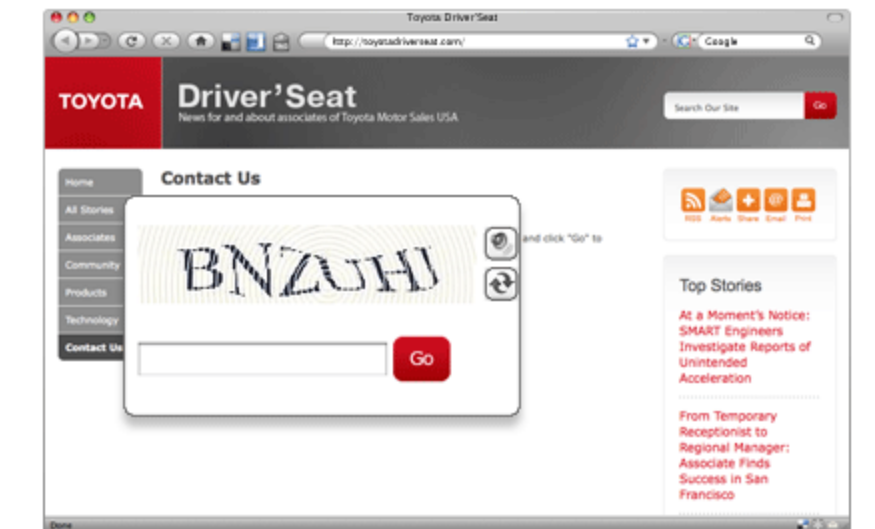


# 8

Does your newsroom **protect your contact information from unwanted guests** (i.e. spam bots) and also make you easily accessible via multiple platforms and channels (e.g.: landline, email, mobile, social media)? Or, is your email address consistently getting hit with unwanted spam from your newsroom?

### *Recommended Action*

To combat spam bots consider adding adding a CAPTCHA code that asks for simple letter and number codes prior to revealing media contact information.



[Toyota Driver'Seat](http://toyotadriversat.com/)

9 Does your newsroom help you to easily **distribute your message across the channels your audiences frequent** (e.g.; search engines, email, facebook, twitter, blogs, YouTube, etc.), so your content reaches these outlets and invites people to come back to your site? Or, do you have to go through IT to get anything published?

### *Recommended Action*

With an online newsroom CMS, your message can be edited, distributed and controlled by you, at a time of your choosing, to targets within your database. This facilitates information that may be time sensitive or directed for a certain audience. With an online newsroom CMS, you're in the driver's seat and you don't have to wait on IT. With just a few clicks, you can control all of the content in your Online Newsroom and distribute that content to key social media outlets including Facebook, Flickr, Twitter and YouTube.

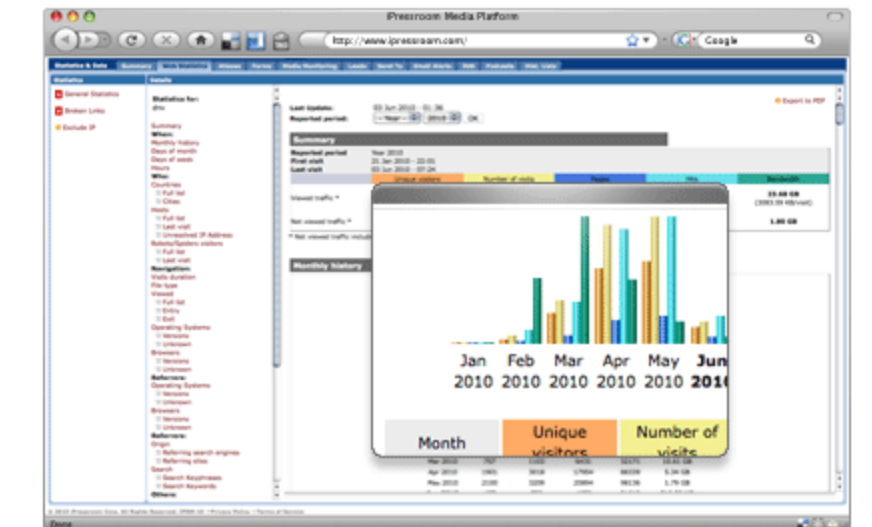


# 10

Does your newsroom **track who visits, where they go within your site, and what content they consume, share, comment on, write-about, or sign-up for**? Or, have you been asking IT and can't get an answer?

## *Recommended Action*

First and foremost, an analytics package (Google has a free version) needs to be established that tracks your links, keywords, and visitor demographics. To take it a step further, an online newsroom CMS has the functionality to provide metrics and tracking tools for the information you distribute, providing a clear picture of visitors and the information that interests them.



To learn more about how to add the above best practices to your organization's online newsroom [contact iPressroom](#) or [Request a Demo](#) and we'll show you in under an hour how you can easily upgrade your online communications capabilities.