

A2 LEVEL
FACT FILES
Journalism

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For first AS award in Summer 2014

For first A Level award in Summer 2015

Glossary of Broadcast
Journalism Terms



journalism

in the Media and Communications Industry (JMC)

Glossary of Broadcast Journalism Terms

Actuality: material recorded in the field.

Agency copy: material which comes in from a freelance press agency or main agency such as the Press Association for use as is or to be rewritten prior to publication.

Alleged: a term used to refer to claims that someone has done something, but has not been found guilty yet. For example, the girl alleges she was attacked by her boyfriend. Until the boyfriend is found guilty in court, we cannot report this as a fact. The girl could be lying.

Anonymous: someone who tells you something newsworthy, but does not give you permission to use their name to broadcast it, or does not give you their name at all (an anonymous source).



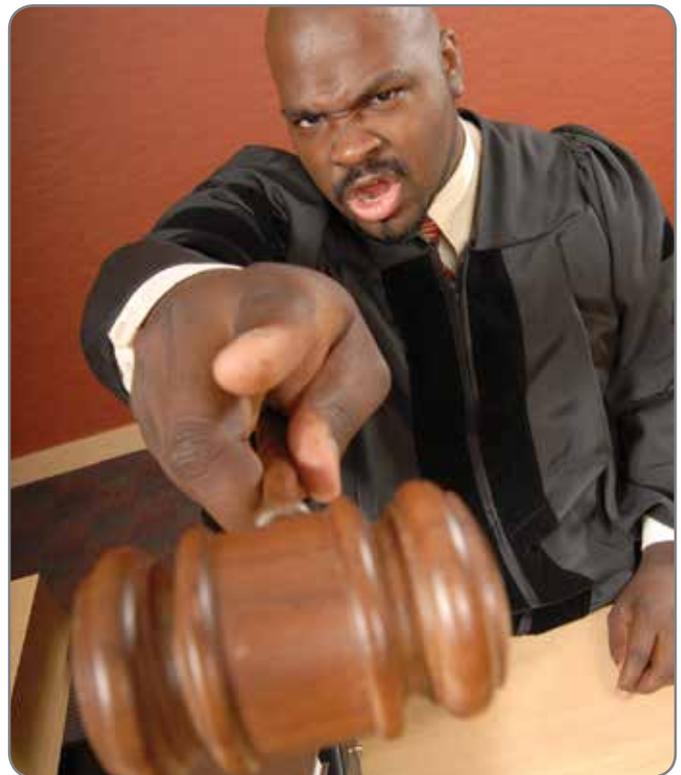
Audio: recording of someone, or of sound effects of an event.

Breaking: an emerging story, usually someone's death, a bomb, a serious road traffic accident.

Bulletin: news stories, read in order, with the most important or most recent story, first. In radio an average news bulletin is 3 minutes.

Bulletin wrap: the same as a Wrap – a piece of actuality with a voice either end.

Contempt of court: is the body of law which protects the integrity of the legal process from outside influence. Contempt can take many forms but the most serious is the publication of prejudicial material when legal proceedings are said to be "active."



An example of contempt of court is as follows: A woman in Craigavon is arrested in connection with killing her baby. Once she is arrested, the case is 'active' and a journalist is not allowed to report anything that might prejudice her case. In other words, he/she cannot report that someone saw her hit the child one afternoon in the shopping centre, nor can they say she is a drunk etc. Innocent until proven guilty - means **innocent until proven guilty** in court by a judge and/or jury present and with evidence.

Another example is when the journalist does something that the judge in the case does not agree with. For example, during the Saville Inquiry (Bloody Sunday), two journalists, one from Northern Ireland, the other from Channel 4 news, were found to be in 'contempt of court' because they refused to tell the judge the names of the soldiers they had interviewed, who were witnesses to the events on Bloody Sunday. Both journalists refused to hand over their notes to the judge.

Copy: written text on a story – a term used by journalists and writers.

Cue: three lines of text introducing the story, or leading into a voiced report.

Deadline: the final time at which material is to be completed for publication.



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Defamation (also known as libel): is the biggest legal pitfall relating to broadcast journalism, with serious financial consequences if one gets it wrong. For example, if a journalist publishes an article in which he/she says that a named person and a photographed person at a flag demonstration in Belfast is a convicted UVF killer, but in fact has mis-identified this person. That person would have grounds for a libel action, as the journalist has wrongly accused him of being a killer and a member of a paramilitary organisation.

Doorstepping: when public figures and other people are in the news, they can expect to be the subject of media attention. Journalists may ask them questions and record the answers for broadcast, without prior arrangement, as they come and go from buildings, airports and so on. In cases of those people journalists are making allegations about or wish to challenge and this is proving difficult, the following applies – Editorial approval will normally only be given when there is evidence of crime or significant wrongdoing and for one, or more, of the following reasons: the subject of a **doorstep** has failed to respond to repeated requests for interview in connection with the wrongdoing alleged; a request for an interview has been repeatedly refused without good reason; there is a history of failure to respond to interview requests or refusal to be interviewed.



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For example, two fire officers die in a fire and the Fire Brigade Union accuses the Chief Fire Officer of negligence because he had not bought the correct equipment. The Chief Fire Officer fails to hold a press conference, so a doorstep is when the reporter and camera person intercept the Chief Fire Officer going into work the next morning, or on the doorstep of his house as he leaves. That's literally where the term 'doorstep' came from.

Facebook: a form of social media where the public can place information about themselves online. An example of when a journalist might use the site is when someone dies. Then, many of their friends will post comments about that person online. Those comments can reveal a lot of information about a person. For example, if there's a comment from the local GAA club passing on their condolences, the journalist may contact the club for more information about the person.



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File: to send in your story or material to the newsroom.

Flash: a one-line read which tells of a breaking story – also called a Snap (Newsflash or Breaking News).

Headline: in on-line or newspapers, the short truncated summation of the story in bold type above the body of the story. In radio, the news headlines are usually the 3 main stories of the day.

Illustrated two-way: live discussion between a reporter and the news reader/presenter, illustration means using clips of audio.

Impartiality: the journalist remains neutral when reporting a story – reports the facts and does not disclose his/her opinion on the subject.

Lead: the top story.

Legalled: the process of checking with the legal department if the story is safe.

Libel (also known as defamation): See **defamation**.

Live: doing a 'live', is a report from a reporter at the scene, broadcasting on air as the story is happening. For example: a huge fire, rioting in Belfast, a bomb, the opening of the G8 Summit in County Fermanagh, an election.



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Live two way: an interview being broadcast as it is happening between the news reporter who is at the scene and the presenter or news reader, who is in the studio.

Mini-wrap: for commercial radio, it's a 30 sec piece with cue - then copy- actuality-copy, voiced up by a reporter; in television a mini-wrap would have pictures and the voice of a reporter. For public service broadcasting, such as the BBC, mini-wraps, packages and voicers are usually longer.

Off the record: a term whereby both the journalist and the source, agree that the information will not be attributed to the source and that the information will be used to inform further investigation and NOT for publication or broadcast.

OOV (out of vision): a piece of TV news in which pictures are seen with a voiceover and is usually no more than ten seconds in duration.

Output: the broadcast or printed news material produced by the news organisation.

Package: a voiced report with clips of audio and actuality. It's longer than a wrap and can extend to as much as 4 mins (BBC/ITN). A radio package in commercial radio is not more than 60' seconds.

TV Package: as above with pictures.

Feature packages: are reports, usually run on consecutive days on a similar subject. For example, Young people and Underage Drinking in the North-west, in North Antrim and in North Down.



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Phoner: an interview conducted on the phone.

Pics: photographs.

Pre-recorded interview: an interview taped before it is broadcast. Both radio and television news journalists use them, especially if no reporter is available.

Press Office: a department in an organisation tasked with handling press enquiries.

Promos: promotions of an interview coming up on radio or television news. Also used on Twitter to alert the public to listen to the news coming up.

Right of reply: giving the subject of reports a fair opportunity to respond to the allegations.

Scoop/ Exclusive: a story that no competitor has.



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SFX: sound effects or music.

Snap: one line of news about a breaking story – also called a Flash.

Source: the person or publication that tells you the story.

Speculation: suggestions that someone did something but there is no proof that they did.

Spiked or dropped: the story is deliberately not used.

Subbing: reducing the size of the original written piece.

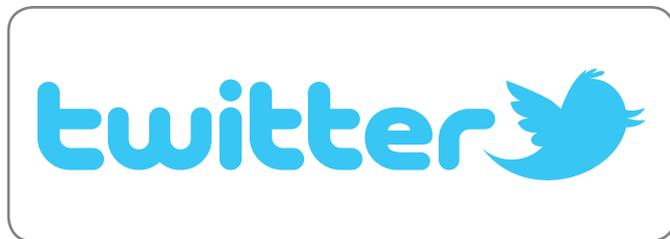
Teasers: short clips of audio or copy about a story coming up on a bulletin, aimed to get people interested and therefore to stay listening for the full details of the story.

Tip-off: a piece of information leading to a story.

Top story: same as the lead story, usually the biggest story of the day, for example a plane crash where several people have been killed or the announcement of over a hundred new jobs being created.

Two-ways: an interview between the presenter and reporter about the story - usually pre-recorded and prepared with scripts of the information for each. They are usually used to broadcast court cases, where there is the danger of getting facts wrong. **Live unscripted two-ways** are not recommended, as it increases the potential of the reporter/ presenter getting facts wrong.

Twitter: a form of social media where a news room or journalists can send 'tweets' (pieces of information) to the public alerting them to news coming up, or to breaking news, or asking the public for their thoughts on a news story. For example, the Twitter account for Cool FM news is @newsatcool. If a journalist wanted views from the public about whether an abortion clinic should be allowed to open in Belfast, they could tweet this question and ask the public to respond.



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Update: an item with additional facts added to a previously aired story. For example, an update on a story about a road traffic accident would include information about injuries/ fatalities and/or further details released as the investigation continues.

Voicer: the story, recorded by the journalist/reporter using their own voice – no actuality, just a voice. Used often for court reporting.



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Wrap: also called a **bulletin wrap**: the journalist's voice is

heard at the beginning and end with a piece of audio in the middle. For example, cue (read by news reader), copy – audio – copy (the wrap is prepared before it goes to air).



Questions

1. What is the biggest mistake a journalist can make in his/her career?
2. Why is social media a useful tool for journalists?
3. What does being in '**contempt of court**' mean? Explain your answer.
4. Why is the term '**alleged**' important for reporters?
5. What does '**off the record**' mean?
6. As journalists, what do we always have to consider about the **sources** of our stories?

