THE LURE OF LONG-FORM

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OVERVIEW: Today’s narrative arc

1. WHY: Making the case for long-form

2. HOW: Key elements

3. WHAT: Examples along the way

4. YES, BUT: Frank discussion about the challenges

5. Q&A: Throughout
### What’s your AM&P field?

- **Bss. & Prof'ns**: 28%
- **Health Fields**: 25%
- **Education**: 14%
- **Mfr. & Indust.**: 10%
- **Advoc., Enthusiast**: 9%
- **STEM Fields**: 8%
- **Government**: 8%

### Anybody online-only?
- Frequency?
LONG-FORM: Qualities

1. **CRITICAL MASS**: Word count (starting at 2,000)

TO OUR READERS.

*The New Yorker* this week devotes its entire editorial space to an article on the almost complete obliteration of a city by one atomic bomb, and what happened to the people of that city... .

The Editors
2. **Insight**: Not just mass, but weight.
LONG-FORM: Qualities

3. Compelling

Otherwise, it’s not long-form. It’s just long.
WHY: The case for long-form

That one story

- Make a name for yourself.
- Make an impression that lasts.
- Make a difference.

Q: No one can keep up with *The New Yorker*. So, why do people renew?
A: They remember that one story.
**WHY**: The case for long-form

**Association Context**: The power of that one story

**Member relations**
- Pride in the affiliation
- Renewals
- Contributions

**Internal, external relations**
- Morale, internal pride
- Awards, recognition
- Higher profile, greater influence
- Bigger budgets, a raise (We can dream, can’t we?)
**WHY:** The case for long-form

**Engage readers:** We all have the same mission

A variety of ways to do that
- Mini-features
- News briefs and updates
- Tip and advice
- People news

A variety of ways to measure
- Pageviews
- Click throughs
- Likes, comments, shares
WHY: The case for long-form

Depth that complements breadth

Long-form metrics
- Time spent
- Thoughts provoked
- Conversations started
- Chords struck
- Hearts touched

And also
- Reader survey: Rate it
- Reader survey: Did you read it?
- Media pickup
- Anecdotal
HOW: Key elements

1. A deserving topic
   • Topic A in your industry, put in real terms, and told through the narrative art.
   • E.g. The tale of a scientist’s eureka moment
   • E.g. A litigation horror story involving malpractice, mismanaged risk
2. Depth and integrity
3. **The right writer**
- Subject-matter expertise
- Or a quick study
- Curiosity
- Writing chops
- Gets your audience
- Maybe it’s you
HOW: Key elements

4. **Structure**: Narrative Arc
4. **Structure:**

**Lede and pointer**
Robert Mueller is like a reporter who didn’t write a clear nut graf about his findings, wanting readers to appreciate his 448-pg story in its full, nuanced glory, & now seems surprised many people haven’t correctly grasped the bottom line.

4:58 PM - 30 May 2019

321 Retweets 1,851 Likes
4. Structure

The Nut Graf
HOW: Key elements

4. Structure
Guideposts, recaps
“I never saw any of them again — except the cops. No way has yet been invented to say goodbye to them.”

4. **Structure**
An ending that ties it all with a bow.
5. Presentation

- Text
- Art
- Design
- Display type
- All equal partners
6. Time
HOW: Key elements

7. Content promotion

Protect your investment.
Talk it up.

• On social media
• On your website
• To outside media
• To your boss and board
“Our imagination makes up for a small budget.”

- Paul Reyes, editor of VQR, National Magazine Award 2019 winner

We can’t spare the time, money, pages, and we don’t have the in-house talent.
YES, BUT ...

Political sensitivities
“Nobody reads anymore.”
LONG-FORM, IN SHORT

Be your best
- Find that one story
- Do it right
- Mind the craft
- Promote it
- Celebrate your success
Thank you.

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