

NewsLab.org - Media Giraffe Profile

NewsLab.org

Deborah Potter - Director / Founder

" . . . [J]ournalists in this age of information overload cannot simply be content with getting information into people's living rooms. We also have to be concerned with getting it into their heads. As the historian James David Barber put it: "If journalism has a responsibility for telling the truth, journalists also have a responsibility for telling it in a way that people can understand it." NewsLab helps local stations do just that, by testing and explaining how viewers react to specific storytelling approaches."

Deborah Potter, NewsLab founder, at the

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About

UPDATE:

Podcasting for broadcasters (Jan/Feb 2006)

Potter left a successful, 16-year career as a network news correspondent for CBS and CNN to found NewsLab. The non-profit's primary goal is to help local TV newsrooms find new ways of telling stories, especially substantive and complex stories, to better inform the television news audience. An additional goal for NewsLab is to provide resources for journalism educators, including classroom and curriculum materials.

NewsLab's work focuses on training and research. Potter offers workshops on writing, storytelling, ethical decision-making, and other topics. Workshops range from an hour or two to half-day, full-day or multiple day sessions.

NewsLab began as an initiative funded by the Park Foundation, a private foundation based in Ithaca, N.Y. From 1998-2003, it was associated with the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, and affiliated with the Project for Excellence in Journalism. Since 2003, it has been an independent not-for-profit.

The NewsLab newsgroup is an email listserve which carries period tips for improving broadcast journalism. It is an open-subscription resource and without charge. Sample postings as of April 4, 2006:

- Can't find any good story ideas? Consider listening to the audience. "Listen Up!" (<http://www.newslab.org/articles/listenup>) will tell you what stations across the country are doing to help listeners and viewers help them discover and cover the news.

- Great reporters cover the same stories everyone else does, but somehow they do it better. The late David Rosenbaum of the New York Times was one of those reporters. Take a look at his deceptively simple note-taking strategy (<http://www.newslab.org/strategies/rosenbaum.htm>) and see if it can work for you.
- Just when you think the broadcast news business couldn't possibly be more about marketing than it already is, another deal comes to light that further fuzzes the line between journalism and advertising. Details in "For Sale," (<http://www.newslab.org/articles/forsale.htm>).
- Want to improve your journalism? Learn more about a specialized beat? Consider a journalism fellowship.

Links

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