2 IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES IN YOUR NEWSROOM

[00:00:12] Aimee This is module 4 video 2: Identifying opportunities in your newsroom. Ask a small or local newsroom where they need help and they'll gesture in all directions. So many things need help or adjustments, it's hard to know where to start. My AP colleague Ernest Kung and I, asked local newsrooms, almost 200 in fact, what they needed help with. We were charged with assessing for the first time U.S. local newsrooms' AI readiness.

[00:00:39] Aimee Through that process, we developed a procurement protocol. We recommend to news leaders to start with the news value chain that's newsgathering, production, distribution and business operations. Select one area that could use more efficiency. Think about those daily annoyances. What is in your way daily that if it was removed, could really free up time? Listen to staff. They'll tell you what's bothering them.

[00:01:06] Aimee Once you've identified the area in which to start, consider this framework, which was informed by news leaders who took our survey. The survey was sent in September 2021 and while a lot has changed since then, the AI usage framework remains a good place to start if you're thinking about how AI might be able to help your workflows. Targeting the repetitive task is the starting point, you'll need then to identify staff skills. Who's going to own this new tool or workflow? Who will train others? Who will be called when it breaks?

[00:01:39] Aimee The new tool should uphold your newsroom values. Be sure that it aligns with your newsroom's mission. Ask important questions like: Who owns the technology? What other sectors does the company serve? How long have they been in operation? Do they train the AI? What system is running in the back end? Is it OpenAI's GPT offering or something else?

[00:02:03] Aimee You'll need to also be sure that data is protected. Understand how the AI tool processes your data to avoid including details that shouldn't get published. Lastly, in many interviews conducted with local news leaders for the survey, they agreed to setting limits and said that humans should have the final say in publishing.

[00:02:22] Aimee Some quick tips. Don't automate a bad process. Sometimes what is needed is a different workflow, not an automation or AI. Ask your team: does what we want to do require AI or do we really need simple process automation? Content that is generated by AI requires transparency for your audience. Be sure to have a game plan for that and a public explanation for why your newsroom is using the new technology.

[00:02:51] Aimee In the forums, let's discuss what one aspect of your newsroom you'd like to build some efficiency in and what kind of tool you think you might need. When my colleague Ernest and I do this in meetings, it can feel like a doctor's appointment. Where does it hurt? Does it hurt when you do this or that? Anyway, you get the point. It can be fun to diagnose and prescribe a solution.