



Nov. 5, 2019

ABC OWNED TELEVISION STATIONS INVESTS IN NEW DATA JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

ABC Owned Television Stations (OTVS) is investing in a new local **data journalism** initiative aimed at driving **hyperlocal, high-impact community reporting**. With the rise of “smart cities” and an increasing amount of **publicly available data**, newsrooms have an unprecedented opportunity to provide **critical context and relevance** around the most important issues impacting local communities. By analyzing data at the neighborhood level, this innovative approach to investigative reporting will bring deeper relevance and context to the 1590 communities that make up ABC’s eight owned stations.

“The ABC owned television stations proudly serve our eight local markets, and with investments in data journalism, we are able to reach deeper into the heart of those communities to deliver news and information that our viewers care about most,” said Wendy McMahon, president of ABC Owned TV Stations.

“Open data is an incredible asset in informing citizens and holding those in power accountable. It’s our duty as local journalists to discover, investigate and communicate important information hiding in data,” said Anna Robertson, vice president of ABC Owned TV Stations Content and Partner Innovation. “This initiative will enable us to supercharge our commitment to putting data journalism at the heart of our newsrooms on a daily basis.”

ABC has already expanded its use of data storytelling to inform coverage of major news stories, including a multiplatform investigative series around measles vaccination rates across the country and the coverage of important earthquake retrofit readiness of local hospitals in nearly 500 communities across Los Angeles.

The initiative will include the following:

- **A new team across its eight newsrooms that will make data journalism a mainstream, daily core of ABC’s newsrooms, staffed by a group of next-generation data journalists and led by newly hired director of Data Journalism, John Kelly.** An award-winning investigative reporter and data journalist, Kelly brings more than 25 years of experience, most recently as director of Data Journalism for the USA TODAY Network where he led dozens of award-winning collaborative investigations in more than 100 local newsrooms across the country, including a finalist for the 2017 Pulitzer Prize. His data work has driven projects that won journalism and innovation awards from IRE, ONA and the National Press Club.

- **Selection for participation in the 2019 Google News Initiative’s Innovation Challenge around journalism in the digital age via a newly announced California-based data journalism project, the California Open Data Exchange (C.O.D.E.).** Through C.O.D.E., ABC will pilot a systematic and holistic orientation around public data, starting with the state of California. Teams will evaluate the full public data ecosystem across the state to extract the most important data points and deliver information in ways that can make a difference in the lives of local consumers. An innovative new “Data Studio” will pilot new ways to bring data stories to life on video and support the creation of hyperlocal digital news products.
- **Partnership with Northeastern University and the Stanton Foundation to research the audience impact of modernizing visuals used in video storytelling across all platforms.** ABC 7 Chicago has hired Adriana Aguilar as a visual content producer. Aguilar, a graduate from the University of Central Florida’s Character Animation Program, will create 2D and 3D animations for daily and longer-form stories produced by the ABC 7 Chicago news team. The team will track the performance of all the specialized content throughout the research project.

About ABC Owned Television Stations

The ABC Owned Television Stations includes WABC-TV New York, KABC-TV Los Angeles, WLS-TV Chicago, WPVI-TV Philadelphia, KGO-TV San Francisco, KTRK-TV Houston, WTVD-TV Raleigh-Durham and KFSN-TV Fresno. The eight owned stations reach 23% of all U.S. television households. The Stations also include the Live Well Network, a broadcast programming service for digital channels in owned markets. The Stations further expanded their content portfolio and reach with the launch of the multiplatform, national lifestyle brand Localish, which is ABC’s viral storytelling brand that brings out the good in America’s cities. Created by and for millennials, Localish serves locally sourced stories that transcend city limits.

Media Contact

Elisa Bolduc

(818) 460-5095

elisa.s.bolduc@disney.com

-- ABC Owned Television Stations --