

ENGW 3335 Technical & Business Communication

Semester-Project Assignment Sheet

TO: Austin Project Team
FROM: dunger1@stedwards.edu
DATE: 28 February 2017

Hello, everyone.

Pasted below you'll find the details about our current campaign. The proposal comes from the head office. We've been asked to drop our regular projects and focus on this campaign. Read through it. If you have any questions, let me know.

Kind regards,

Don Unger
Parler
Austin Project Team Leader

Introduction

As you know, Parler is a global, cross-platform network that includes our site and a presence on mobile apps, Facebook, Snapchat, YouTube, and many other digital platforms. While all our materials are shared via our website, we create all our materials to be shared across these platforms.

We strive to connect deeply with our audience, and give them news and entertainment worth sharing with their friends, family, and the people who matter in their lives. We have the innovation-obsessed culture and structure of a venture-backed tech company, the research and reporting chops of traditional news media, and are growing an engineering team that is focused on building the media platform for today's world and for the future.

We operate a global news organization headquartered in New York and an entertainment studio based in Los Angeles. Our news and entertainment divisions serve a next generation, highly engaged audience that consumes video and multimedia content across platforms, on mobile, and has an expectation that media will be relevant and connected to their lives, easily shareable, and globally accessible.

Our greatest hits connect with people on a massive scale, and play a significant role in connecting people to each other. We are best known for quality infotainment (provocative quizzes, lists, memes, and infographics), award-winning news investigation, and thought-provoking digital tools.

Our current campaign takes aim at the many issues entangled in fake news. While our main audience is composed of Gen Zers and Millennials, we see this campaign as one where we can draw Gen Xers and Boomers to our network. The following proposal details the campaign and provides a project plan to be implemented by your team leaders. If you have any questions, check with your team leader.

Our Campaign

In the aftermath of the U.S. election this November, fake news emerged as a hot topic across all media networks. Subsequent investigations in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Guardian*, *Buzzfeed*, *Teen Vogue*, and innumerable other outlets addressed how fake news gets created, spreads, and what impact this news has on Joe and Jane Q. Public. Parler is a bit behind the curve here, and we need to make up ground. To that end, we're devoting many of our production teams to the issue, and we are developing projects that fill a niche left by other outlets. We want to focus on creating tools that our audience can use to navigate the information ecosystem. Such tools might address the following aspects of this ecosystem:

- How search engine algorithms encase you in an information bubble
- What you can do to break through this bubble
- How different media vet information (from book publishers to Wikipedia to media networks)
- How sites considered the stalwarts of Truth, such as Politifact and Snopes, vet information (and how to use these sites)
- How targeted content affects users' access to information (including information about cookies, etc.)

Other topics should emerge, and they will need to be approved by your team leaders. The next section lays out that process.

Project Plan

Because we are asking all the teams to rush this through in order to meet the 10 May deadline, all teams should stick to following project plan.

Proposals

Submit a short proposal to your team leader by **9 March**. You will receive feedback on your proposal, and your proposal should be finalized by **23 March**. The proposals need to be approved to ensure the quality of variety of content for our campaign. Speak to your team leader about the format.

In general terms, your proposal must describe (1) an individual text, such as a list, quiz, etc., and (2) a more complex deliverable, such as a video, podcast, etc. Both texts should include either descriptions of complex technologies written for a lay audience or a procedure for dealing with fake news. Remember, the campaign relies on providing tools for our audience not just reportage.

Reports

Once your proposal has been approved, you should compose a short report providing background information about your aspect of the issue and describing why the deliverables

you propose would be useful to our audience. Report drafts are due **4 April**, and the final report should be sent to us on **11 April**. Speak to your team leader about the format.

Pitch Meeting

On **11 April**, your team will hold a pitch meeting where you pitch your proposals and be divided into groups to develop your second deliverables. Each team member is expected to develop his/her own text and contribute to a group project. Speak to your team leader about the format.

Deliverables & User Testing

Draft deliverables are due **25 April** at which time you will receive feedback from your team leader. Final deliverables are due **8 May**. Prior to submitting your final materials, your team will conduct usability testing. Your team leader will arrange the test structure, but this testing will rely on focus groups composed of Parler readers.

We believe that this campaign will help Parler expand our network and reach new audiences. We thank you in advance for adjusting to this campaign structure and for all your hard work. Throughout the project your team leader will provide additional information. Should you have any questions about the campaign, contact him/her.