

Developing a mass media (or digital media) analysis

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Abstract

A mass media analysis is a complex product that is made following a multivalent process. This process includes four stages: understanding the topic (problem definition), establishing facts and generating hypotheses, processing information/raw data, and developing the analytical product. The actual development of the media analysis product includes: presenting the fact/facts, carrying out a scientific and creative analytical approach, making inferences (inductive, deductive, transductive procedures), qualitative and quantitative radiography, determining the effects (yield) (accuracy and profitability) and drawing up conclusions.

Keywords: mass-media analysis, digital media analysis, development of the media analysis product, inference

1. Presentation of the facts

Any product opens with the presentation of the fact, the fact or facts. X-rays are taken and the essential coordinates are defined. Then, hypotheses and scenarios are constructed, trends are marked, and consequences are indicated. All these are built in close connection with the direct or indirect, explicit or implicit description of the context.

This component is based on classic questions (who, whom, what, where, when, how), evaluation questions (why / for what reason) and prospective questions for forecasting purposes (with what effects / for what purpose). The answers to these questions form the body of the analysis.

2. The scientific and creative approach

The mass media (digital media) analyst uses his imagination in combination with scientific methods to reach the best conclusions. Much of the "science of analytics" can be imbued/infused/taught/learned by familiarizing practitioners with theoretical approaches and practical tools (such as various analytics software packages). However, creative aspects are more the prerogative of vocation and self-improvement than of the teaching-learning binomial.

3. Making inferences

Factual material is subject to inference procedures in relation to context and background. Inference is a logical connection between cogitative elements. Thinking can derive anything from anything. Thinking has no obligations except to the reality on which it dwells. It must be cohesive and coherent. Creative thinking works at the edge of the illogical; it is purely natural thinking, without restrictions, at the limit of error, but also at the limit of genius. At the other end of the range is critical thinking, that is, that thinking which thinks about itself while it is actually thinking: "thinking about how we are thinking while we are thinking" (Lowenthal, 2017). Critical thinking is a self-supervised thinking, a strictly logical thinking that self-evaluates its own way. All thinking is inferential, that is, all thinking creates a natural, creative or logical connection between elements in the presence of one another. Inference can ascend to reasoning. In any case, the analytical process is an inferential process. When we talk about logical thinking, it is mostly covered by deductive reasoning and inductive reasoning. Deductive reasoning is the process by which a new idea is obtained, usually called a conclusion. It consists in the fact that from two previous judgments (called premises), based on the logical relationships between them, a conclusion is necessarily drawn up. Deductive reasoning is based on syllogisms, that is, on two premises and a conclusion. Inductive reasoning consists of an inference (logical operation by which the transition is made from one statement to another) from singular statements (observations, descriptions, experiments) to universal statements - hypotheses or theories. Through inductive reasoning, similarities or differences between phenomena can be detected, in the form of general formulations. A digital media analyst can call in parallel to deduction - to fill in the spaces not covered by the existing data, and to induction - for example, by validating the conclusions based on a

precedent, on the basis of historical references (similar events that produced an outcome of the nature of the expected).

4. The quantitative and qualitative approach

The relationship between these two elements is related to the ratio of precision versus profitability, in the sense that the avalanche of quantitative elements (especially in analyzes where the analyzed dynamics are expressed or highlighted by mathematical ratios) does not always contain or express the essential conclusion

Any statistician, accountant or economist can argue that the use of numerical values sometimes hides or distorts complex realities. From this perspective, it is always more useful to describe a reality than to express it in numerical values.

5. Accuracy and profitability

Accuracy is a desirable part of any analytical process, but the determination with maximum accuracy of some elements (for example, the market shares of the competition, the size of the electoral pool of political opponents, etc.) must not be achieved regardless of the claimed costs in terms of time or resources. Also, the appropriate dosage of exact argumentative elements (values, quotas, dimensions) is required in order not to encumber the analytical process and not to load the product with insignificant details in relation to the essential idea or conclusion.

6. Drafting the conclusions

The last step of the elaboration is based on the internal deductive character of the analytical product in the cure. The conclusion of the analytical material is a picture, it is a concise and clear picture of a problematic situation. This vivid, functional image provided must be more than the sum of the information on which it is based. This activity requires more logic and common sense than established methodological benchmarks, once again validating the parable of the archaeological reconstruction of a vessel based on incomplete ceramic shards.

In drawing up the conclusions, a strict continuity must be ensured between what emerged from the development of the other four previous steps.

7. Micro-case study; concrete benchmarks of a case of developing and promoting, in a very short time, an informational product

In order to respond to a request made by the management of the media operator, regarding the urgent transmission of a problem score regarding "The current challenges of the media operator from the perspective of the ability to withstand the market exclusively in print variance", the profile analyst must, in principle, proceed with the following steps:

- querying the available databases;
- formulating requests for information to other analysts in the trade, for the submission of relevant data in the context of the request;
- the presentation of the request received from the relatives of the mass-media operator for obtaining pertinent information on the subject addressed;
- analyzing the database resulting from the consultation of the own database, capitalizing on the sources of public information on the subject under analysis (internet pages of similar mass media institutions, print media, etc.), in order to highlight the current problems / stakes under their attention regarding the print series and the online series;
- elaboration of an information project, based on the extracted aspects;
- finalizing the informational product and promoting it to the management of the media operator.

8. Conclusion

Elaborating an analysis of a mass media event (digital media) represents, on the one hand, painting a picture of facts, causes, effects, consequences, trends, solutions to counter the negative effects and outlining opportunities to exploit the challenge. On the other hand, as a structure of thought, elaboration is a convergent, coherent and cohesive set of inferences. The set of inferences can be synthesized into an inference that is the focus of the analyst and that constitutes a title or subtitle of the analysis document.

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