



Tips on conducting a source audit/building a diverse source database

By: Alfonzo Galvan and Jana Hayes

What is a diversity audit?

- A diverse source audit involves determining demographic information for the sources who appear in our stories -- gender, race, age, and location
- This information can then be compared to local demographic data, to see how well your newsroom is representing the community it covers. Sometimes it's impossible to know an issue is present without taking a count.
- At the Philadelphia public radio station WHYY, a source audit in 2018 showed 80% of sources were white, and only 4% were Black. The next year, white sources went down to 65% and Black sources moved to 26%.

Why is it important?

- Gannett began [newsroom censuses](#) last year to track diversity in the newsroom. So, we know who is covering the community.
- It's equally important to know who is being asked to speak for the community in our stories.
- “Diversity is a journalism imperative. Without accounting for the range of lived experiences, we fail to serve parts of our communities. Journalism, in its truest form, should be produced for the benefit of all, not only those who wield a particular power, class or authority.” -[American Press Institute](#)
- [Example 1](#), [example 2](#), [example 3](#)

How to do your own

Date	Story title/ Summary	Source name	Role in story	Story	Story theme-	Story theme	Geographic	Race/	Gender	Org affiliation or jo	Political
1/9/18	Governer Christie's final	Dr. Brigid Harrison	explainer/analyst/expert	2W	politics/policy		New Jersey	WHT	F	professor of political	UNK
1/9/18	Governer Christie's final	Dave Heller	host	2W	politics/policy		Philadelphia	WHT	M	WHYY	UNK
1/9/18	Governer Christie's final	Gov. Chris Christie	doer/subject	2W	politics/policy		New Jersey	WHT	M	NJ State Governor	REP
1/9/18	Philly DA firing prosecuto	Tom MacDonald	reporter		2 courts/law	politics/policy	Philadelphia	WHT	M	WHYY	UNK
1/9/18	Philly DA firing prosecuto	Larry Krasner	doer/subject		2 courts/law	politics/policy	Philadelphia	WHT	M	Philly DA	DEM
1/9/18	Bensalem police's	Laura Benschhoff	reporter		2 courts/law	politics/policy	Philadelphia	WHT	F	WHYY	UNK
1/9/18	Bensalem police's	Fred Harran	explainer/analyst/expert		2 courts/law	politics/policy	Bensalem, PA	WHT	M	Director of Public	UNK
1/9/18	Bensalem police's	Theresa Conejo	reactor/opinion/comment		2 courts/law	politics/policy	Bensalem, PA	WHT	F	community activist	UNK
1/9/18	Trump administrations'	Jeremy Firestone	explainer/analyst/expert	2W	health/sci/envir	politics/policy	Delaware	WHT	M	University of	UNK
1/9/18	Trump administrations'	Dave Heller	host	2W	health/sci/envir	politics/policy	Philadelphia	WHT	M	WHYY	UNK
1/9/18	School choice in	Avi Wolfman-Arent	reporter		6 education		Philadelphia	WHT	M	WHYY	UNK
1/9/18	School choice in	Walyyuddin Abdullah	doer/subject		6 education		Samuel	BLK	M	parent of school	UNK
1/9/18	School choice in	Florrie Abdullah	affected		6 education		Samuel	BLK	F	school student	UNK
1/9/18	School choice in	Kim Ellerbee	explainer/analyst/expert		6 education		Samuel	BLK	F	Samuel Powel	UNK
1/9/18	School choice in	Katey McGrath	reactor/opinion/comment		6 education		Philadelphia	WHT	F	parent, public school	UNK
1/9/18	School choice in	Sylvia Simms	reactor/opinion/comment		6 education		Philadelphia	BLK	F	school-choice	UNK

Start surveying your sources

- Track name, age, gender identity, race/ethnicity, source title or category, ZIP Code
- Give an option to opt into a source database (Don't tokenize your sources)
- Big tip: Understand different forms of diversity. Expert level?

Things to keep in mind

- Keep it simple by deciding what variables are most important for your coverage.
- Give people the option to self-identify.
- "Rome wasn't built in a day and neither will your diverse source audit database," -Alfonzo Galvan.
- Ask your sources to introduce you to others

How to create diverse sources

- Be visibly present.
- Ask/Answer questions
- Give a platform
- Network among your sources
- Learn to talk about differences
- Understand/Recognize your biases

NEWS

Time for tamales: Sioux Falls Latino community unwraps seasonal treat

Alfonzo Galvan and Rebekah Tuchscherer Sioux Falls Argus Leader

Published 10:44 a.m. CT Dec. 22, 2020

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15 Photos

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Photos: Ortega sisters make homemade tamales

Sisters Imelda and Norma Ortega make homemade tamales on Wednesday, Dec. 10, at their home in Sioux Falls.

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Alfonzo Galvan Sioux Falls Argus Leader

Published 5:28 a.m. CT March 22, 2021

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Makenzie Huber and Alfonzo Galvan Sioux Falls Argus Leader

Published 6:02 a.m. CT April 8, 2021 | Updated 12:18 p.m. CT April 9, 2021

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How this Sioux Falls family from Mexico honors past generations on Day of the Dead

Alfonzo Galvan and Annie Todd Sioux Falls Argus Leader

Published 5:54 p.m. CT Nov. 1, 2021 | Updated 11:51 a.m. CT Nov. 2, 2021

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NEWS

La India Taina: Sioux Falls first Puerto Rican restaurant to open in early 2021

Alfonzo Galvan Sioux Falls Argus Leader

Published 3:47 p.m. CT Jan. 6, 2021

How to retain
sources/create
a diverse
source
databank

- Follow up constantly (especially after stories)
- Get out in the community "Don't create events and expect them to come, ask to be invited to their already existing events."
- Could overlap or be a separate tab to your source audit
- Find ways to encourage accountability.

Links/Resources

- [Tipsheet from The Baltimore Sun](#) on how they built their DEI Beat/Desk + DEI Committee, content audit + source database
- [WHYY and the rocky road to cultural competency](#)
- [Database of Diverse Databases](#), put together by Editors of Color

Questions?
