

GATEHOUSE MEDIA INNER CIRCLE 2015 EXPECTATIONS



Here is a breakdown of production expectations, used to evaluate all GateHouse newsrooms on quarterly Inner Circle performance. Detailed instruction on how to satisfy each expectation can be found in the Inner Circle 2015 handbook.

For questions or training requests, contact Carlene Cox, director of newsroom development, at ccox@gatehousemedia.com.

GateHouse Media operates newspapers and associated websites across 31 states in more than 400 markets, including The Tuscaloosa News and The Gadsden Times in Alabama.

CONTENT INITIATIVES

Content initiatives consist of five initiatives. All newsrooms are required to produce in-depth news, Seen-on-Scene photo galleries and lists; newsrooms of 25+ staff are also required to produce regional projects and FOIA projects.

Lists: Staff writes articles in the form of a numbered lists, focusing on local places, history or areas of interest

- 1 staff:** 4 per quarter
- 2-3 staff:** 4 per quarter
- 4-8 staff:** 4 per quarter
- 9-13 staff:** 4 per quarter
- 14-18 staff:** 4 per quarter
- 19-24 staff:** 8 per quarter
- 25+ staff:** 8 per quarter

In-depth news: Reporters produce proactive coverage of a local issue, providing context and perspective

- 1 staff:** 1 per week
- 2-3 staff:** 1 per week
- 4-8 staff:** 1 per week
- 9-13 staff:** 2 per week
- 14-18 staff:** 2 per week
- 19-24 staff:** 3 per week
- 25+ staff:** 5 per week

Seen-on-Scene galleries: Newsroom staff attends community events and creates galleries of posed attendees, in small groups of two or three people. Galleries must be local, rather than syndicated among multiple publications

- 1 staff:** 1 gallery per month
- 2-3 staff:** 1 gallery per month
- 4+ staff:** 1 gallery per week

Project reporting: Staff in multiple newsrooms work together to create a regional project or series; individual newsrooms can also localize quarterly Pinnacle projects

Requirement for all newsrooms of 25+ staff: 1 per quarter

FOIA projects: Newsrooms use information obtained from one or more Freedom of Information requests to write a story or series.

Requirement for all newsrooms of 25+ staff: One FOIA submission request per month

MULTIMEDIA

Multimedia consists of three areas: Photo galleries, video and entertainment video.

1-8 staff: Photo galleries and video

9+ staff: Photo galleries, video and entertainment video

Photo galleries: A consistent array of photo galleries online, and for use in print when possible

- 1 staff:** 1 per week
- 2-3 staff:** 1 per week
- 4-8 staff:** 2 per week
- 9-13 staff:** 5 per week
- 14-18 staff:** 5 per week
- 19-24 staff:** 6 per week
- 25+ staff:** 7 per week

News video: An array of videos to attract a growing digital audience, and to supplement our storytelling online

- 1 staff:** 1 per week
- 2-3 staff:** 1 per week
- 4-8 staff:** 2 per week
- 9-13 staff:** 3 per week
- 14-18 staff:** 4 per week
- 19-24 staff:** 5 per week
- 25+ staff:** 7 per week

Entertainment video: Informative, entertaining video content, focusing on local dining, music and performances

- 1 staff:** n/a
- 2-3 staff:** n/a
- 4-8 staff:** n/a
- 9-13 staff:** 3 per quarter
- 14-18 staff:** 3 per quarter
- 19-24 staff:** 1 per week
- 25+ staff:** 1 per week

READER ENGAGEMENT

Reader engagement consists of four areas: Community blogs, reader advisory boards, Storify and reader-contributed content. The number of required categories depends on the size of your newsroom:

1-8 staff: 1 selection
9-24 staff: 2 selections
25+ staff: 3 selections

Community blogs: Newsrooms recruit community members to blog at least once weekly on specific topics of reader interest

1 staff: 1 blog, posting once a week
2-3 staff: 2 blogs, posting once a week
4-8 staff: 2 blogs, posting once a week
9-13 staff: 3 blogs, posting once a week
14-18 staff: 4 blogs, posting once a week
19-24 staff: 4 blogs, posting once a week
25+ staff: 5 blogs, posting once a week

Reader advisory boards: Newsrooms recruit residents to take part in reader advisory board meetings, then publish key improvements or changes as a result of reader feedback

Requirement for all newsrooms: Monthly meetings with a panel of at least six residents, followed by an article or column detailing any changes to occur based on the feedback

Storify: Newsrooms produce regular Storify packages on breaking or trending news topics, utilizing social media posts from local residents

1 staff: 2 per quarter
2-3 staff: 2 per quarter
4-8 staff: 2 per quarter
9-13 staff: 4 per quarter
14-18 staff: 8 per quarter
19-24 staff: 1 per week
25+ staff: 1 per week

Reader-contributed content: Newsrooms solicit content from readers, such as photos, recipes or stories, for weekly, anchored display. Opinion content, such as letters or guest columns, will not apply.

Requirement for all newsrooms: A package of four or more contributed content items in print and online each week

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media consists of five areas: Facebook, Twitter for reporters, Twitter for newspapers, Google+ and Pinterest. The number of required categories depends on the size of your newsroom.

1-8 staff: Facebook and Twitter for reporters
9-24 staff: Facebook, Twitter for reporters AND one additional category
25+ staff: Facebook, Twitter for reporters AND two additional categories

Facebook: Engage with readers by regularly posting and interacting with users

1 staff: 2 posts per day
2-3 staff: 2 posts per day
4-8 staff: 4 posts per day
9-13 staff: 6 posts per day
14-18 staff: 6 posts per day
19-24 staff: 8 posts per day
25+ staff: 8 posts per day

Google+: Newsroom staff or editor gains known SEO benefits by posting regular content

Requirement for all newsrooms:
7 posts per week

Twitter for reporters: Reporters tweet using individual, professional accounts to promote content and engage with users

Requirement for all newsrooms:
All reporters should tweet twice a day, seven days a week, regardless of newsroom staff size. Scheduling tools such as Hootsuite may be used for days on which reporters are not working.

Twitter for newspapers: Newsroom staff or editor tweets under the newspaper's title, promoting content and engaging with users

1 staff: 1 tweet per day
2-3 staff: 2 tweets per day
4-8 staff: 3 tweets per day
9-13 staff: 4 tweets per day
14-18 staff: 4 tweets per day
19-24 staff: 6 tweets per day
25+ staff: 8 tweets per day

Pinterest: Newsroom staff or editor posts visually-oriented content and promotes newspaper's brand

Requirement for all newsrooms: 7 pins per week

WEIGHTED EXPECTATIONS

For 2015, Inner Circle expectations have been broken into four categories and weighted according to their importance. Additionally, newsrooms are no longer required to satisfy all requirements in order to be certified; instead, they will be certified on a sliding scale based on their size.

Category weights:

Content Initiatives: 40/100

Multimedia: 25/100

Social Media: 25/100

Reader Engagement: 10/100

Total: 100/100

Requirement for certification:

1-24 staff: 85% total needed

25+ staff: 90% total needed

1-8 staff:

Content Initiatives: 3, each worth 13.3%

Multimedia: 2, each worth 12.5%

Social Media: 2, each worth 12.5%

Reader Engagement: 1, worth 10%

Total: 8 initiatives

A newsroom of 1-8 staff could still be certified after missing any one initiative.

9-24 staff:

Content Initiatives: 3, each worth 13.3%

Multimedia: 3, each worth 8.3%

Social Media: 3, each worth 8.3%

Reader Engagement: 2, each worth 5%

Total: 11 initiatives

A newsroom of 9-24 staff could still be certified after missing EITHER:

- One content initiative
- One social media and one reader engagement initiative
- One multimedia and one reader engagement initiative
- Both reader engagement initiatives

25+ staff:

Content Initiatives: 5, each worth 8%

Multimedia: 3, each worth 8.3%

Social Media: 3, each worth 8.3%

Reader Engagement: 3, each worth 3.3%

Total: 14 initiatives

A newsroom of 25+ staff could still be certified after missing EITHER:

- One content initiative
- One social media initiative
- One multimedia initiative
- All reader engagement initiatives