CHALLENGE #5

Summary

       Create a way to verify the accuracy of User Generated Content, like photos or video clips, submitted to news organizations by members of the public.

Challenge:

       The growing availability and use of User Generated Content is both an opportunity and a challenge for news-based platforms (broadcast or digital). Increasingly, TV stations and websites are encouraging members of their audience to submit videos or photos. They can end up being broadcast as part of a newscast, or they may be posted on the news organization's website. These can range from images of severe weather (like ice storms or tornadoes) to a video clip of the key play in a neighborhood youth soccer game.

       User Generate Content dramatically increases audience engagement. But increasingly, news organizations are struggling to prevent fabricated or doctored audience-submitted content from making its way on-air or onto their websites. Even though news organizations try to monitor these submissions from unpaid contributors, they routinely (and often belatedly) discover that the dramatic photo of a tornado bearing down on a school has been digitally altered. Or, they learn that clever video editing created the illusion of that game-winning shot from half court in a middle school basketball game. When these fabrications are detected, they damage the credibility of the news organization and cause the audience to question the authenticity of anything submitted by non-staff contributors.

       In addition, some members of the public seem unaware that they are limiting their "ownership rights" when they voluntarily submit content to a broadcast station or a website. This has led to disputes when their unique or dramatic video goes viral and they discover they have no licensing rights, even though people from around the world are seeing it.

       WCMH-TV (Columbus) is seeking a way of verifying the accuracy of User Generated Content, as well as establishing protocols for licensing this content to avoid disputes involving those who submitted it.

Deliverables:

    - A summary of the problem within its context
       In order to ensure your solution is truly innovative, you need to investigate the problem. Are there any existing similar technological approaches to what you propose? If so, how does your solution try to recreate, improve on or differentiate itself from a previously successful approach? What observations, studies, industry research, or communication best practices support your approach to the problem?

- A viable solution

Come up with a way of verifying the accuracy of User Generated Content. Your solution may be a single method (such as a way to digitally check an audience-submitted video against what might already exist on YouTube). But your solution also may embrace a combination of methods for verifying accuracy (Example: requiring that contributors register before submitting content and, in the process, sign off on legal language that gives licensing rights to the news organization).

- A workable business model

What will it cost to implement your solution? Are there any potential revenue streams to offset those costs?

- A strategy to reach diverse audiences

Special attention should be given to ways for engaging underserved and underrepresented audiences.

Resources:

These links may help get you started:

http://share.nbc4i.com

http://www.poynter.org/latest-news/regret-the-error/160045/how-cnns-ireport-verifies-its-citizen-content/

http://www.poynter.org/latest-news/regret-the-error/171713/

http://www.verificationhandbook.com