

No more time constraints

It's clear in today's market if you haven't mastered texting, your message may get lost. If you have doubts, listen to Craig LeMay, associate professor at the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University who challenges his writing class with "a first assignment to write a story in thirty words and text the assignment in." He knows and today's journalism students know that learning how to condense messages into simple, fast communications is quickly becoming the cornerstone of how news is transmitted.

Cell phones run our world. We bet you have been in a meeting or at a social gathering recently when one person surreptitiously checks his cell phone for updates and starts a whole chain of those around him glancing at their phones. It's not that they all are getting the same message, but, rather, one person's quick peek reminds others to check in quickly as well. Everyone at the table wants to stay on top of the day's news.

At the Obama inauguration, the story got out around the world thru texting and cell phones ahead of or at the very same time people saw the activities in real time. Technology has made communications a 24 hour global business. Texting, photo uploads from mobile phones, Twitter, Facebook and MySpace connected reporters to stories, broadcasters to instantaneous visuals and people around the world who could watch and comment and make news with nary a piece of paper changing hands. As part of their inaugural coverage, CNN even asked for photos to be sent by everyone on the mall so they could introduce their new technology with an ever changing photo montage.

Texting lets us receive and deliver information in real time. Leverage that strength and your message stays front and center.

Technology has changed how stories, news tips, responses are transmitted, frequently arriving as text messages around the clock.

While faxes frequently will be ignored, it is rare that a message delivered by texting will be bypassed. Think of a reporter trapped in a courtroom when the verdict is delivered and the judge has yet to dismiss the jury—how does he beat deadlines? By texting, of course.

Can you keep it short?

The hottest site on the web is Twitter.com which positions itself as "a service for friends, family, and co-workers to communicate and stay connected through the exchange of quick, frequent answers to one simple question: What are you doing?" With quick keystrokes, you can deliver your message in seconds, not minutes or hours. It's fast becoming the place where news stories begin today.

The next time you craft a release or create a newsletter, think about whether you can say it in thirty words or less. As Albert Einstein said: Everything should be made as simple as possible, but no simpler.