Building Trust in Online Communities

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Thank you for attending our session at the Online News Association's 2017 conference. As you heard, we don't believe there are hard rules about building trust in online communities. Every publication is different, and people group themselves into all sorts of different audience subcultures. The aim of our session was to get you thinking about trust, to what extent it is important to you and and your organization, and what if anything you can do differently to engender trust when you return to your newsroom.

Questions to discuss with your colleagues
1. What is the relationship between transparency and trust? Would showing our audience how we produce our journalism make us more trustworthy?
2. To what extent is it the duty of reporters, editors and audience engagement editors to actively build trust? How would they each distinctively do that?
3. Would it increase trust for our audience to know the people behind the bylines? How much do we want to promote individual journalists vs. the overall news organization?
4. What are other media organizations and platforms doing to engender trust?
5. What's more important to our audience strategy: a large community of followers or a highly engaged, loyal one?
6. When we share our content on social media, how far should we go in removing nuance?
7. How do we maintain high journalistic and ethical standards across platforms?
8. How can we use video, audio, and other elements to help build reader trust?
9. Should our media organization evangelise publicly for the value of trustworthiness?
10. What kind of information and level of interaction does our community need and want? If not from us, where do they currently get it from? (Think beyond journalism!)
11. What would our users like to contribute to the community? Why would they contribute?
12. How do you expect the community to interact with you?

Links to relevant sources on journalism and trust
1. Three ways we build trust on social media
2. Trusting News Project Report 2017
3. Trusting News Project
4. Indicators of Trust in the News - Santa Clara University
5. The most trusted publishers and how they're restoring trust on social
6. Reaching the summit: Building up our social media and digital links with a week of workshops
7. This is what a news organization built on reader trust looks like
8. "Who shared it?": How Americans decide what news to trust on social media
9. Three ways to fix a broken news industry
10. Transparency is the new objectivity