

Online Communication in the Digital Age
Prof. Rashmi Gaur
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology
Lecture – 17
Digital Writing

Good morning dear friends and welcome to today's module. In the previous module, we had talked about digital communication infrastructure in the context of virtual teams and virtual presentations. In this module and also in the coming modules during this week, we shall be looking at one of the key components of technical communication that is the writing process. We will try to understand the shift from traditional writing to the landscape of digital writing. Why it matters today and how the integration of technology has changed the whole outlook of writing and communication in our world. It has changed from the perspective of the writer as well as from the perspective of the reader.

We will look into the framework processes and the use of emerging forms of communication technologies as part of digital writing. The concept of digital writing addresses the question of how writing and communication work in digital spaces. It is the art and practice of preparing documents primarily by computer and often for online delivery. Unlike traditional writing, digital writing requires designing, planning and constructing interactive and dynamic texts that often require multiple media elements like text, images, video and audio across digital spaces.

Let us look at it in somewhat more detail.

The Landscape of Digital Writing

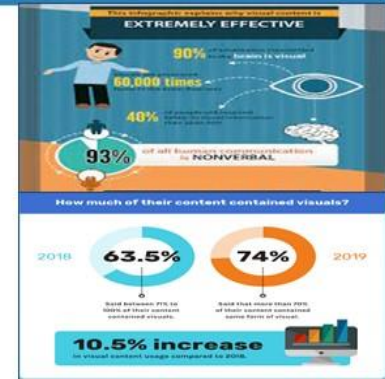
- Digital Writing is a form of creative writing that uses digital tools and software as an integral part of its conception and delivery.
- Dan Lawrence in his book *Digital Writing* (2022) describes digital writing as “writing with technology and writing the type of content that appears across digital media”.
- It includes a wide range of forms like technical writing, webpages, emails, copywriting, blogs, social media posts, digital correspondence and digital storytelling.



Digital writing includes a wide range of forms like technical writing, web pages, email, copywriting, blogs, social media posts, digital correspondence and digital storytelling, etc. It has been defined by Dan Lawrence as writing with technology and writing the type of content that appears across digital media. We can also look at it as a form of creative writing that uses digital tools and softwares as an integral part of the conception as well as delivery. These forms primarily suggest that digital writing is mainly used for web and social media.

The most effective digital writers understand at least in part how the tools and technologies they are using operate. However, digital writing cannot be restricted to computers and word processing softwares only. It is also about the networked spaces that computers provide to us where we can compose, create, share and publish to the world and therefore, the technical skills related to digital writing are built on the foundation of as we have discussed earlier to a participatory culture.

- A key component of the Digital Writing process is the *participatory culture*. This includes the skills of:
 - Appropriation: The ability to meaningfully sample and merge media content like text, audio, video.
 - Transmedia Navigation: The ability to follow the stories and information across multiple media modes.
 - Visualization: The ability to interpret and create data representations for the purposes of expressing ideas, finding patterns and identifying trends.
 - Networking: The ability to search for, synthesize and disseminate information.



Visualization Skills in Digital Writing
Sources: www.wordstream.com

So, we can say that the participative culture is a key component of the digital writing process and it requires the skills of appropriation, transmedia navigation, visualization and networking. Appropriation refers to the ability to meaningfully sample and merge media content like text, audio and video.

Transmedia navigation is the ability to follow the stories and information across multimedia modes. Visualization suggests the ability to interpret and create data representations for the purposes of expressing ideas, finding patterns and identifying trends. Networking of course is the ability to search for, synthesize and disseminate information. The images given show how particular visual elements can make the writing come alive. It is designed and shared among global communities for a variety of purposes.

Digital writing requires appropriating multiple ideas and multiple content simultaneously. Like text writing, it requires crafting effective ideas and leads and adding appropriate details as well as bringing effective transitions over a strong conclusion. Therefore, effective digital writing encompasses various processes that involve creating, editing and publishing written content using digital tools. The safest approach in this direction is perhaps to start drafting without the support of the web only in a Word document or any other text editor. Let us look at the writing process.

The Digital Writing Process

1. DRAFTING



Drafting techniques include creating a visual diagram or writing an outline. Word processing software or online writing platforms like **Microsoft Word** or **Google Docs** offer features like spell-checking, grammar correction, and formatting options, which can enhance the writing process.

2. REVISE



The revising stage involves reviewing and improving your content. Digital tools like **Grammarly**, **ProWriting Aid** and **Hemingway Editor** can assist by providing insights into readability, word choice, and sentence structure.

3. EDIT



The editing and proofreading stage involve carefully reviewing your work for errors. Editing software tools like **Adobe Acrobat Pro** and **Scrivener** are used for editing digital documents in professional settings.

The digital writing process incorporates drafting, revising and editing. For drafting we find that there are platforms like Microsoft Word or Google Docs which offer different features like spell check, grammar correction, etc. And they also provide us formatting options. The revision stage also involves reviewing the structure from the point of view of grammar and later on also from the perspective of presentation. And tools like Grammarly, ProWriting Aid and Hemingway Editor can assist us by providing insights into the readability, choice of our words as well as sentence structures.

Editing and proofreading stage also involves the use of certain softwares like Adobe Acrobat Pro and Scrivener which might be used for editing digital documents in professional settings. Digital tools can assist with reorganization of paragraphs, with the refinement of our sentences and can assure coherence and clarity in our writing. Also, digital writing is created for a particular audience, a particular purpose and at a particular time via a particular technology or medium. This means that online tools can invite virtual feedback by instant sharing of texts. This adds to the participatory culture of the digital writing processes as the role and visualization of the probable audience has become much more significant in comparison of the previous stages of non-digital writing processes.



The Digital Writing Process

4. FEEDBACK



Tools like **Cloud Storage** or other collaborative platforms can aid in easy sharing of works and real-time collaboration. Suggestions and constructive criticism can enhance your writing.

5. FORMAT



This includes design and formatting features like headings, using bullet points, adding hyperlinks, incorporating images or multimedia elements, and considering accessibility features for a diverse audience.

6. PUBLISH



Digital tools allow easy distribution, sharing, and promotion of your written content through digital platforms like personal blogs, websites or social media.

The digital writing process also incorporates feedback, format options as well as the publishing opportunities. Tools like cloud storage or other collaborative platforms can aid in easy sharing of works and real time collaboration. Suggestions and constructive criticism also enhance our writing. The format aspects includes design and formatting features like using headings, bullets, hyperlinks, incorporating images as well as certain multimedia elements so that our writing also becomes more accessible for the target audience. Digital tools also allow easy distribution, sharing and promotion of the written content through digital platforms like personal blogs, websites or social media.

It is important to remember that digital tools are only aids. They do not substitute for our own critical thinking and it is advisable to make use of the suggestions provided by these tools but ensure that they align with our own intended meaning and style. As writing has changed with computer mediated and networked environments, our conceptions about what it means to be literate has also changed. There are different theories that can inform our thinking of what it means to write with technology and how writing has been changed by technology. Two major theories in this context pertinent to understanding digital writing are Lankshear and Knobel's new literacies and Paul Gilster's digital literacies.

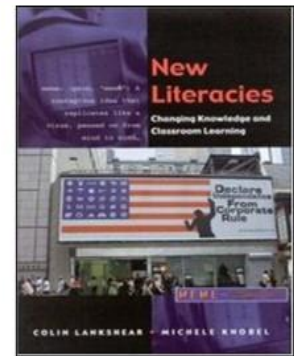


swayam



Theories Behind Digital Writing

- The **Theory of 'New Literacies'** was developed by Michele Knobel and Colin Lankshear in their work *New Literacies: Changing Knowledge and Classroom Learning* (2003).
- It outlines how newer technologies and social norms are changing what it means to be literate.
- It suggests two mind-sets that accompany old and new ways of envisioning literacy.
 - One mindset approaches the world as being much the same now as it was in the past, but only a bit more 'technologized'.
 - The other mindset sees the world as having changed significantly due to digital technologies and that cyberspace is part of the physical world.



Knobel and Lankshear's *New Literacies*
Source: newlearningonline.com

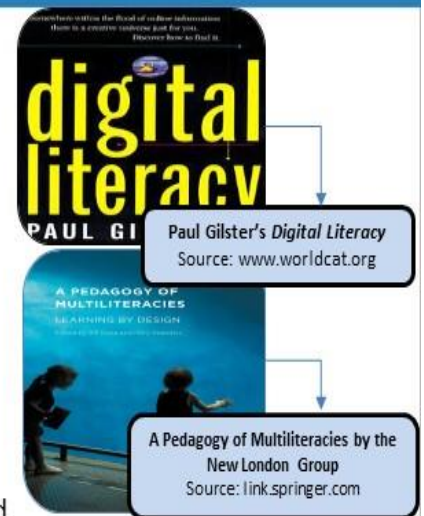


The theory of new literacies was developed by Michele Knobel and Colin Lankshear in their work. It outlines how newer technologies and social norms are changing what it means to be literate in a society. It suggests two mindsets that accompany old and new ways of envisioning literacy. The first mindset approaches the world as being much the same now as it used to be in the past only with the difference that the world today has become more technologized. The second mindset sees the world as having changed significantly due to the digital technology and also the fact that cyberspace is part of the physical world is recognized in the second theory.

The cyberspace is not only part of the physical world but also operates on its values. Knobel and Lankshear remind us that writing is no more a closed system but one that involves networks and shared visions of how knowledge is made and distributed across digital spaces. The second theory called the pedagogy of multiliteracies emerged from the work of the New London Group, a group of scholars in the field of literacy studies.

Theories Behind Digital Writing

- The theory, a **pedagogy of multiliteracies**, was developed by the New London Group in their seminal work titled "A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing Social Futures".
 - The concept of being multiliterate means knowing visual, aural, spatial, gestural and other literacies that move beyond basic print texts.
 - Writing is about the many ways in which language, culture and technology interact.
- Paul Gilster developed the theory of '**Digital Literacy**' in his seminal work *Digital Literacy* (1997).
 - It suggests that evaluating content and mastering search engines are the building blocks for being digitally literate.



The theory of pedagogy of multiliteracies was developed by the New London Group. It suggests that the concept of being multiliterate means knowing visual, oral, spatial, gestural and other literacies that move beyond basic print texts.

Writing is about the many ways in which language, culture and technology interact. Paul Gilster had developed the theory of digital literacy in his 1997 work which suggests that evaluating content and mastering search engines are the building blocks for being digitally literate. We will learn about digital literacy in detail in the coming modules. Nearly all the writing that we do today is informed by digital writing tools whether we get information from the net or see a commercial that helps us think of a creative idea to reach our audience in a presentation. These tools can incorporate websites, softwares, media sources and any other type of network communication.

This is also the reason why digital writers need to have certain key skills to be effective at their work. And now let us have a look at them.



Key Skills for a Digital Writer

- **Prototyping** helps digital writers create mock-ups or prototypes.
 - These can be sketches or testable demonstrations.
- **Optimization** is the process of 'tweaking' and 'tuning' your digital strategies to get the best results.
 - It makes sure the content is efficient and effective and are being driven by data.
- **Interactivity** refers to the extent to which a media object can communicate with a user.
 - It also includes our responsiveness to our consumers in the form of feedbacks, testimonials and replies.
- **Automation** is allowing technology to run on its own.



Digital Prototyping



CHAT GPT as an AI Chatbot is a Perfect Example of Automation

Sources: www.thegrocer.co.uk, aloha.co



The key skills which are required by a digital writer incorporate prototyping, optimization, interactivity and automation. Prototyping helps digital writers in creating mock-ups or prototypes which can be in the form of sketches or testable demonstrations. Optimization is the process of somehow tuning and tweaking the digital strategies to get the best possible results to ensure that the content is efficient and effective and is being driven by data at proper speed.

Interactivity refers to the extent to which a media subject can communicate with the user including our responsiveness to our consumers in the form of feedbacks, testimonials and replies. Automation is allowing technology to run on its own. The pictures show creating a prototype of a website using Adobe Photoshop. The website can be optimized if we feel that they are not performing appropriately. Similarly, ChatGPT is an example of an AI driven chatbot which has automated many tasks like answering questions, generation of content, language translation and much more.

Digital writing encompasses various forms and styles of writing that are specifically tailored for digital platforms. They include blogs, technical writing, copywriting, emails, etc. All of us now are familiar with the terms blogging, copywriting and UX writing.

Types of Digital Writing

Blogging

- This involves writing and publishing articles or posts on a blog.
- Typically focused on personal experiences, opinions, or specific topics of interest.



Copywriting

- This involves writing persuasive and compelling content.
- Usually for promotional campaigns, ads and other forms of marketing communication.

UX Writing

- This includes crafting concise and user-friendly text for user interfaces (UI) or chatbots.
- It focuses on clarity, guidance, and delivering a positive user experience.



Sources:
www.englishteacherwebsites.com,
www.peppercontent.io, uxmag.com

Blogs are typically focused on personal experiences, opinions or specific topics of individual interests. Copywriting involves writing persuasive and compelling content usually for promotional campaigns, ads and other forms of marketing communication.

UX writing includes crafting concise and user-friendly text for user interfaces or chatbots. It focuses on clarity, guidance and delivering a positive user experience. The casual and personal manner of blogs are adopted by many companies today to share their user experience. The product description of Swiggy and McDonald's that we saw in these images as part of copywriting show how digital writing can persuade audience in a creative and interactive manner. In the context of different types of digital writing, we should also look at social media and website content writing, email writing and technical writing.

Types of Digital Writing

Social Media and Website Content Writing

- This involves crafting concise and engaging content for posts, captions, and hashtags on social media.
- Creating written content for websites and webpages.



Sources: neilpatel.com, pngtree.com, whatfix.com, <https://iimskills.com/difference-between-content-writing-vs-social-media-writing/>



E-Mail Writing

- Composing emails for various purposes, including business communication, customer support, marketing campaigns, or personal correspondence.

Technical Writing

- Creating instructional or informational content, such as user manuals or online tutorials.
- It explains complex concepts or procedures in a clear and concise manner.



Swajati



Social media and website content writing involves crafting concise and engaging content for different posts, captions and hashtags on social media and at the same time creating a written content for websites and web pages. E-Mails are normally used for various purposes, particularly in the context of business communication, customer support, marketing campaigns. They are also used for personal correspondence. However, for informal personal correspondence, we find that their popularity has rather diminished. Technical writing suggests the creation of instructional or informational content.

For example, the preparation of users manuals or online tutorials. It explains complex concepts or procedures in a clear and concise manner for an ordinary audience who might not be exposed to the technical side of the using of a machine or any particular equipment. All these forms of digital writing focus on persuasiveness and search engine optimization that optimizes online content to improve its visibility. The digital landscape continually evolves and new forms of digital writing may emerge as technology advances and new platforms are developed. Let us take the example of copywriting to understand how digital writing plays an important part in it for creating compelling content for

marketing and advertising purposes.

So, we look at different examples in this slide.

Copywriting as a form of Digital Writing

- British Airways used digital writing on a London billboard in its 'Look Up' Campaign to identify planes overhead.
- Copy clearly communicates the benefits of their service and generates interest.

Sources: www.youtube.com, www.nike.com, www.theb2bhouse.com

- The digital ad by the athletic brand Nike is a compelling copy that grabs attention and conveys its value proposition.
- The tagline shows the brand's stance and support with the NFL quarterback, Colin Kaepernick.
- It struck the chord with the right consumers.

- The application 'LinkedIn' uses metrics in its ad copy which entices viewers to click for guides.
- Copywriters have strategically placed relevant keywords within the copy with meta tags and headings, that improve the website's visibility.
- It increased the market value of these brands.

11

British Airways had used digital writing on a London billboard in its look up campaign to identify planes overhead. The copy clearly communicates the benefits of their service and also generates interest. The digital ad by the athletic brand Nike is a compelling copy that grabs attention and conveys its value proposition. The tagline shows the brand's stance and support with the NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick. It struck the chord with the right consumers.

Similarly, the application LinkedIn uses metrics in its ad copy which entices viewers to click for guides. Copywriters have strategically placed relevant keywords within the copy with meta tags and hashtags that improve the website's visibility. It increase the market value of these brands.

The internet has now become a publishing platform for a variety of genres. This entails having knowledge about how to write for the web. And the web has become a digital space to write that is specifically tailored for online consumption. It focuses on creating content for websites and also involves considering the user experience,

readability and navigability of the webpage. Let us look at the key aspects of digital writing for the web.

Digital Writing for the Web

- Digital writing for the web refers to the practice of creating written content specifically tailored for consumption on digital platforms.
 - This includes websites, blogs, social media, and online publications.
- Descriptive headings, short paragraphs and bullet points are used to present information in a scannable format.
- Hyperlinks are incorporated to provide additional resources or direct readers to related information.
- It is also enhanced with multimedia elements like images, videos and infographics.



Writing for the Web

Sources: content-writing-india.com, voixdigital.co,
www.realviewdigital.com

As we have remarked earlier, digital writing for the web refers to the practice of creating written content specifically tailored for consumption on digital platforms.

It may be in the shape of websites, blogs, social media, online publications, etc. It should have normally descriptive headings, short paragraphs and bullet points to present information in a format which can be scanned easily rather than to be read in a detail word by word. Hyperlinks are incorporated to provide additional resources or direct readers to related information. It is also enhanced with multimedia elements like images, videos and infographics.

When we publish content to the web, we have a potentially global audience. However, simply publishing the content on web does not mean that anyone will be able to see it. We need to know the number and type of users who visit the website and thereby to optimize the search engines so that this content will reach the targeted audience.



swayam



- By understanding web traffic and SEO, digital writers can create content that aligns with the needs, interests, and search queries of their target audience.
- **Web traffic** refers to the number and type of visitors who access a website or its specific pages.
- **Search Engine Optimization (SEO)** contributes to generating web traffic by increasing the visibility of the website based on search performance.
- By incorporating relevant keywords within their content, digital writers can optimize content for search engines and attract web traffic.
 - This increases the visibility of their web pages in search engine results and improves user experience.

Return ON Investment



Effective digital writing that incorporates web traffic and SEO principles contributes to business growth and a higher return on investment (ROI).
Sources: scripbox.com, geekflare.com

In short, we need to know the web traffic and search engine optimization so that digital writers can create content that aligns with the interests of the target audience.

Web traffic refers to the number and type of visitors who access a website or its specific pages. Search engine optimization or SEO contributes to generating web traffic by increasing the visibility of the website based on search performance. By incorporating relevant keywords within the content, digital writers can optimize content for search engines and attract web traffic. Effective digital writing practices contribute to driving web traffic while increased web traffic validates the effectiveness of digital writing strategies. SEO will be taken in detail in the coming modules. Websites typically have different types of pages that showcase different forms of digital writing and digital writing for these pages requires considerations such as audience targeting and readability. The content on these pages should be tailored to the needs and preferences of the online audience while maintaining a consistency of tone in voice.

So we repeatedly emphasize the role of the audience in communication. Earlier only in the context of the offline communication, but now we find that the participation by the audience has become much more important and effective and immediate in online or digital communication.

- Effective digital writing plays a crucial role in creating persuasive and compelling content for webpages.
- A landing page is a standalone web page that is specifically designed with a focused objective in mind and to drive traffic away from one place to another.
 - Digital writers use headlines, sub-headlines, visuals, a compelling CTA (Call-to-Action) and engaging content.
- Digital writing plays a crucial role in creating an effective privacy policy page for a website.
 - all relevant topics and user data such as cookies, data retention, data sharing, security measures, user rights, and contact information are addressed.
- The home page serves as the gateway to a website.
 - Digital writers use unique selling points, brand storytelling and multimedia integration.



Sources: www.freepik.com, w3-lab.com, revenue-tower.com



Effective digital writing plays a crucial role in creating persuasive and compelling content for web page. A landing page is a standalone web page that is specifically designed with a focused objective in mind and to drive traffic away from one place to another. Digital writers use headlines, sub headlines, visuals and compelling call to action and engaging content.

Digital writing plays a crucial role in creating an effective privacy policy page for a website also. All relevant topics and user data such as cookies, data retention, data sharing, security measures, users rights and contact information are addressed on them. The home page serves as the gateway to a website and digital writers use unique selling points, brand storytelling and multimedia integration for its creation. These are just a few examples of the different types of pages that can be found on a website. The specific page and the required write up will vary depending on the purpose, goals and nature of the website.

This means that digital media interfaces hail certain people as their ideal users and others as not so ideal. Let us look at this closer through a form of digital writing called UX writing also known as user experience writing.

UX writing, also known as User Experience Writing, refers to the practice of creating clear, concise and user-centered content that appear throughout the interface of digital products.

The 'Ideal' User and User Experience



Examples of UX Writing
Source: Slater Katz

- UX writers focus on:
 - Microcopy: Small snippets of text that are used throughout a user interface to provide guidance, instructions and labels.
 - Macrocopy: Informative messages, invitations or confirmations.
 - Information Architecture: Organization and structure of content within digital product.
 - Voice and Tone: Personality and Style of writing used in the user interface.
 - Onboarding: Introduces users to a new product or service.

UX writing refers to the practice of creating clear, concise and also user centered content that appear throughout the interface of digital products. UX writers focus on micro copy that is small snippets of text that are used throughout a user interface to provide guidance, instructions and are also used as labels. Macro copy which is informative messages, invitations or confirmations.

Information architecture that is organization and structure of content within a digital product. Voice and tone which is personality and style of writing used in the user interface. Onboarding which introduces users to a new product or service. If we look at the pictures of UX writing on digital products like Spotify, Apple and Slack the design thinking only caters to a particular style and a particular audience. This target audience is the ideal addressee or what the Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin calls as the super addressee.

The following slide explains the concept of super addressee for those who might not be familiar with it. The following slide explains the concept of super addressee for those who might not be familiar with it. Such writing shows the strategic projection of certain socio-cultural practices. Let us see what Bakhtin means by the concept of a super addressee.



- Mikhail Bakhtin, in one of his essays in the collection, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays* (1986) suggests that utterances are always dialogic and directed at someone.
 - This entails the anticipation of a listener, producing what Bakhtin calls as the 'superaddressee' who is shaped by this anticipation.
- Software interfaces become a text that creates ideal subject positions in the form of ideal recipients.
- Digital writers not only adapt their utterances/writing to their users but the users are also configured by the writer.
- Interfaces always entail a superaddressee, that is, a social identity that users take on by legitimating only certain kinds of participants and interaction.

LANGUAGE IS NOT A NEUTRAL MEDIUM THAT
PASSES FREELY AND EASILY INTO THE
PRIVATE PROPERTY OF THE SPEAKER'S
INTENTIONS; IT IS
POPULATED-OVERPOPULATED-WITH THE
INTENTIONS OF OTHERS.

- MIKHAIL BAKHTIN -

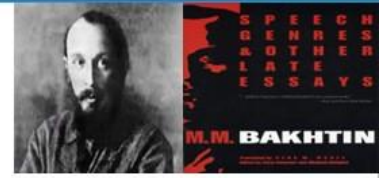
Source: libquotes.com



So as Bakhtin has explained interfaces always entail a super addressee that is a social identity that users take on by legitimating only certain kinds of participants and interaction.

This means that software interfaces shape audience and their participation through the lens of user stylization and the imposed interaction that may result from this. Let us look at this with the example of cookie consent notices which is a common form of UX writing.

- UX writers thus do not simply write for a targeted audience but also craft their audience, producing a 'superaddressee' (an ideal listener, imagined to fully understand the utterance).
- Cookie consent notices are microcopies used by UX writers.



Mikhail Bakhtin in his work *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays* refers to 'Superaddressee'
Sources: issuu.com, literaryocean.com

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UX writers, through their linguistic style, construct a superaddressee, a social identity that users have to take on if they wish to use that software.* • Stylized as casual interaction, they impose certain actions and subject positions on their users. 	<p>We love cookies! That's why we're working on great new innovative products.</p> <p>For now, though, you'll have to be happy with the cookies we use to ensure you get the best experience on our website. Therefore, we would be happy if you accept these cookies. If not, you can just adjust your settings and preferences.</p> <p>Cookie settings Yeah, let's rock it!</p>	<p>Listen up, people. We use cookies!</p> <p>Cookies help us run our services and make them more fun for you. You get a better experience.</p> <p>For the full ingredients please read our Cookie Policy.</p> <p>Whoo! Hop on a minute... How do I change my cookie settings? You ok with our use of cookies?</p> <p>Yes, I agree!</p>
---	--	---

*Lara Portmann- "Crafting an Audience"

This website uses cookies ✕

This website uses cookies to improve user experience. By using our website you consent to all cookies in accordance with our Cookie Policy.

[ACCEPT ALL](#)

Cookies are small text files used to remember information about the user
Source: cookie-script.com

- UX writers collaborate with designers to create an explicit stylization of their content. This projects a particular socio-cultural style and a pre-determined social identity that creates a constrained participation structure.*

We can easily say that UX writers do not simply write for a targeted audience, but they also craft their audience producing a super addressee or an ideal listener imagined to fully understand the utterance. Cookie consent notices as we know are micro copies used by UX writers. They collaborate with designers to create an explicit stylization of their content and this projects a particular socio-cultural style and a predetermined social identity that creates a constraint participation structure.

Let us see a video of a TED talk where a UX designer, Johannes Ippen talks about how UX writing and designing has become the driving force behind successful products. So Ippen talks about how UX writing and designing has become the driving force behind successful products. At the same time, we find that this happens at the expense of happiness, mental health and purpose. Let us listen to him.



- Ippen talks about how UX writing and designing have become the driving force behind successful products.
- Also, at the same time, this happens at the expense of happiness, mental health and purpose.

Source: Youtube, youtu.be/dpXBV3COwJM



Companies like Facebook, Spotify or Twitch they know about that. Those companies are dominant in their space because of great UX. They know how to create amazing experiences for their users and that is a problem because see all of these products, all of these companies are services. They are targeted towards a mass audience and they monetize through advertisement. The more people use these products, these services the better.

Actually those services only work when people do use them. How good a product is can be determined through key metrics like usage rate or retention. We call this engagement and we base our design decisions on them. So we design to grab your attention, to kidnap it, to lock it in and hold on to it. We design these products to be used.

The real-world impact of that is horrifying. Last year there have been almost 800,000 divorces here in the United States alone. Over a third of them, a British study found, are blaming Facebook for these divorces. So the design decision to give couples a tool that gives them full transparency of interaction and a crazy amount of information about the other person, about the significant other does result in unhappy relationships. And giving them a product that is designed to be used and attention grabbing doesn't really help

either. So whenever you read a news story about a kid spending too much money in a mobile game or how we are spending 13% of our productive time in social media or how great user experience products like Uber or Airbnb are driving the gig economy, all of these are design decisions someone at these companies made.

A design decision that truly stands out in my opinion is Snapchat streaks. So we know that Snapchat is an important and yeah, really cool social media and direct communication tool. When you are sending a message with a friend, forcing back for a couple of days, you are on a streak. You get rewarded by this little fire icon right next to your name and you have to keep the streak going.

The longer, the better. And users of Snapchat do take this very seriously. So what started as a fun little feature to showcase and emphasize relationships now resulted in something that drives anxiety, that results in labor and that creates fear of missing out. He talks about how companies like Facebook, Spotify and Snapchat create amazing user experience for their users through writing and design. It shows how these companies as services targeted towards a particular audience create horrible impacts in the name of engagement and design decisions. Creating and presenting written content on websites requires web building tools and these tools comprise various modes of digital writing like design software, visual editors, formatting and content management.

These web building tools are necessary to create an interactive piece of digital writing.

Using Web Building Tools

- **Website Builders** are user-friendly platforms that provide intuitive drag-and-drop interfaces, pre-designed templates, and customization options.
- **Content Management Systems (CMS)** allow digital writers to create, edit, and publish written content on websites.
 - These include platforms like WordPress, Joomla and Drupal.
- **Design software and visual editors**, such as Adobe Photoshop, Sketch, or Figma play roles in the visual presentation of written content.
- **Version control systems** are important tools that ensure that written content is tracked, revised, and reviewed in a controlled manner.



Popular Content Management Platforms
Sources: winningwp.com



Website builders are user friendly platforms that provide intuitive drag and drop interfaces, pre-designed templates and customization options. CMS or content management system allow digital writers to create, edit and publish their content on websites. Design softwares and visual editors like Adobe Photoshop, Sketch or Figma play a role in the visual presentation of written content. Version control systems are tools that ensure that written content is tracked, revised and reviewed in a controlled manner.

These tools provide platforms, interfaces and collaboration mechanisms that allow digital writers to present their content effectively on the web. Digital writing does not solely rely on writing, it is a crossover between writing, language, technology and also the visual. Changing cultural trends have led to the rise of many narrowly defined sub-genres or micro-genres within digital writing. Micro-genres like fan fictions and memes have become cultural icons in digital platforms. They employ many non-linear storytelling techniques to engage readers in innovative ways.

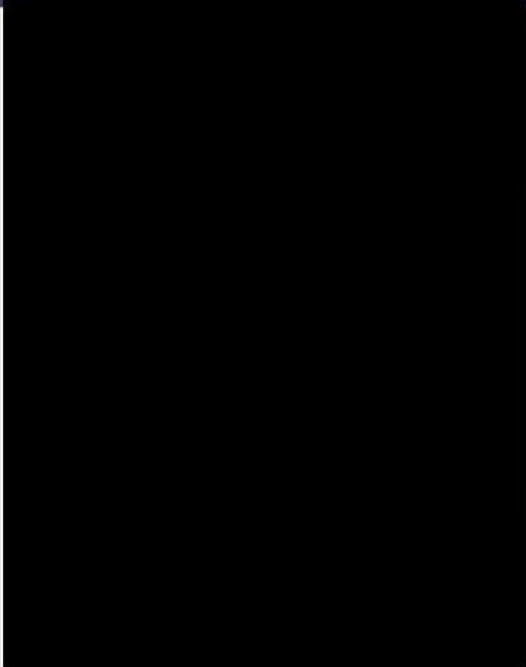
Microgenres and Digital Writing

- Microgenres in digital writing can arise from the intersection of specific themes, styles, or formats with the digital medium.
- The digital landscape has provided a platform for fans to share their fan fiction about existing characters or storylines with a wider audience and engage in collaborative storytelling.
- Memes play a significant role in digital writing through humorous or satirical images, videos, or text snippets.
 - They employ relatable text captions, remixing of content, cultural references, intertextuality, humor and satire.
- Digital Writing incorporates Flash Fiction that are extremely short stories often limited to a few hundred words or even a single tweet.



Memes and Fan Fiction are Popular Content for Digital Writing
Sources: www.mememaker.net, avenoire.tumblr.com

Microgenres can arise from the intersection of specific themes, styles or formats with the digital medium. Memes play a significant role in digital writing through humorous or satirical images, videos or text-snippet shots. Digital writing incorporates flash fiction that are extremely short stories often limited to a few hundred words or even a single tweet. Let us take an example of the popular brand Nike's ad as a micro-genre of digital writing within the broader genre of advertising. The video shows Nike's ad for once don't do it in support of racial justice.



- The ad subverts the brand's classic slogan "Just Do It" by calling on people to "For Once, Don't Do It".
- It showcased the brand's protest against police brutality towards Black people and the death of George Floyd who died in police custody.
- The writing reflected the brand's core values, identity and focus on consumer demands.

Source: <https://youtu.be/drcO2V2m7lw>

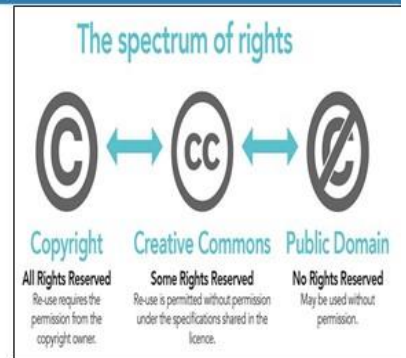
Swajali 21

The video features a black background with white text with a message that asks people not to pretend there is not a problem in America and not to turn their backs on racism. The ad closes with let us all be part of the change. So we can see that this ad subverts the brand's classic slogan just do it by calling on people to for once don't do it. The writing reflected the brand score values identity and focus on consumer demands. So, it becomes clear now that digital writing exists in a multilayered environment which is shaped by ethical, legal and policy concerns.

As writers use content found on the net, they must consider whether their use of material constitutes fair use or violates copyright or any other sentiment. All these elements shape the digital ecology. So, what do we mean by fair use and Creative Commons?

Fair Use and Creative Commons

- Copyright is a legal framework that grants creators exclusive rights over their original works.
- Fair use can be applicable in the digital writing context when you want to quote, excerpt, or reference someone else's work.
 - It allows for limited use of copyrighted material without explicit permission.
- Creative Commons (CC) is an organization that provides a set of licenses that allow creators to offer permissions beyond the scope of traditional copyright.
 - It offers a flexible approach to licensing digital writing by enabling creators to grant others to modify and share their works under specific conditions.



The Spectrum of Rights
Sources: researchoutreach.org

Copyright is a legal framework that grants creators exclusive rights over their original works. Fair use can be applicable in the digital writing context when you want to quote, excerpt or reference someone else's work. It also allows for limited use of copyrighted materials without explicit permission.

Creative Commons is an organization that provides a set of licenses that allow creators to offer permissions beyond the scope of traditional copyright. Works under public domain are not protected by copyright or whose copyright has expired. Copyright gives creators a control over how their works are reproduced, distributed, performed or displayed. Digital writers should be aware of copyright protections and consider fair use when incorporating the work by other people and can leverage Creative Commons license to share their own work under specific terms and conditions. There are other ethical dimensions to digital writing and composing. Let us look at some of them.



Ethics in Digital Writing

- **Authorship and Ownership:** Digital writing involves respecting Intellectual Property rights and obtaining licenses for copyrighted material we use.
- **Privacy and Data Protection:** Ethical digital writing respects user privacy and ensures the protection of personal data.
- **Plagiarism and Attribution:** Proper attribution, through citations is essential when incorporating or building upon the work of others to avoid plagiarism.



Source: cionews.co.in



Swajanti



These ethical considerations incorporate authorship and ownership, privacy and data protection, plagiarism and attribution and privacy and data protection. Respecting intellectual property rights and obtaining licenses for copyrighted material deals with authorship and ownership issues and ethical digital writing also respects the privacy of the user and ensures the protection of the user's data. Plagiarism and attribution suggest that proper attribution through citations is essential when incorporating or building further upon the work of other people is concerned. Digital writers have an ethical obligation to ensure the accuracy and truthfulness of their content. We shall discuss intellectual property rights, participation and digital citizenship in the coming modules.

Nevertheless, one of the main aims of digital writing is to reach a vast and global audience. Digital publishing makes it easier for the work to be discovered and accessed by a large group of people. When we look at the issue of publishing digital writers, what immediately comes to our mind are social media platforms like Twitter and LinkedIn which offer opportunity to share and publish our digital writing with a broad audience.

Publishing Digital Writing

- Digital Portfolios, which are a curated collection of your best works, is an excellent way to showcase and publish your digital writing.
 - They are usually presented as a website, slide show or a blog.
- Collaborative Word Processors like 'Google Docs or Drop Box' give easy access to multiple writers to insert comments, highlight text and suggest revisions.
- Longer pieces of work and e-books can be published and distributed to digital marketplaces and self-publishing platforms like 'Smashwords' and 'Lulu'.
- Social media platforms like 'Twitter' and 'LinkedIn' offer opportunity to publish and share your digital writing with a broad audience.



Platforms like WordPress, Wix, or Squarespace provide user-friendly tools to help you create and manage your site.

Source: www.websitebuilderexpert.com

Digital portfolios that is a curated collection of our best works is an excellent way to showcase and publish our own digital writing.

It can be in the shape of a website, a blog or a slide show and such other means. Collaborative word processors like Google Docs or Dropbox give easy access to multiple writers to insert comments, highlight text and also suggest revisions. Longer pieces of work and e-books can also be published and distributed to digital market places and self-publishing platforms like Smashwords and Lulu. With a sea of content available online, writers must also know how to actively promote their work and employ effective strategies to interact with readers and also utilize social media to attract and retain an audience. Engaging and building a loyal audience in the digital space is challenging as online audience tend to have a short attention span due to the constant flux of information. However, digital writing is expanding as it is being shaped by technological advancements, evolving reader preferences and the changing landscape of digital media.

Digital writing will likely continue to integrate with social media platforms and online communities.

Conclusion- Future Directions

- Digital technologies should be approached critically, philosophically and rhetorically.
- Digital writing has started incorporating interactive elements and immersive experiences to engage readers and to create a participatory reading experience.
 - This includes interactive storytelling, augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR).
- With the increasing use of data analytics and artificial intelligence (AI), digital writing may become more personalized and adaptive.
- Digital platforms can amplify marginalized or underrepresented voices, allowing for greater diversity and inclusivity in storytelling.



We can say that digital technologies should be approached critically, perhaps also philosophically and rather rhetorically. Digital writing has started incorporating interactive elements and immersive experiences to engage readers and also to continually create better participatory reading experiences. With the increasing use of data analytics and AI, digital writing may become more personalized and also more adaptive. Digital platforms can amplify marginalized or underrepresented voices allowing for greater diversity and inclusivity in storytelling.

The future of digital writing may witness a broader range of perspectives, stories and voices gaining visibility and recognition. In the next module, we will focus on interdisciplinary approaches in the field of digital writing, particularly digital literature and also how to access the online digital content. We shall look at it through an analysis of various literary texts and select critical perspectives. Thank you.