



Integrating social media into lesson plans

The Pew Research Center reports that [73 percent](#) of Internet consumers in 2013 used social media, approaching 10 times the audience of 8 percent in 2005. The 18-25 year old group used more social media than any other.

Social media is an essential tool for newsrooms. Its capabilities include news distribution, content gathering, source locating and marketing.

With social networking platforms' increasing influence on the way people receive information comes the need to [train journalists to co-evolve](#) with social media developments to effectively reach young news consumers. This is why some colleges are offering [social media as a major](#); constructing modern marketing strategies requires a new set of skills.

For students, assignments on different levels:

Flashlight: Miami Herald sports writer Michelle Kaufman teaches at the University of Miami. Her students live-tweeted LeBron James' career-high [61-point](#) game. Many news outlets didn't bother with the game, just before a road trip and against a lesser opponent. Kaufman's class dominated the Twittersphere. Organize a class to live-tweet an event. Did the class make a splash by [trending on Twitter](#)?

Spotlight: Social media encourages immediacy. But journalists still need to verify facts. Check out the [PBS Media Shift](#) article on tools that can reveal altered pictures. Websites such as [snopes.com](#) show what myths aren't true. What other sites or devices check facts?

Searchlight: Social media enables new types of news gathering, especially when stories are breaking. [Storify](#) is an online device that allows users to create timelines with social media content. Select an ongoing story and create your own Storify. Continue your coverage until it is no longer relevant.